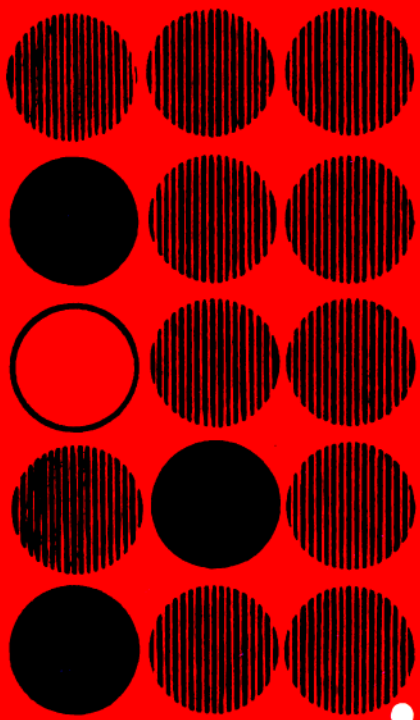
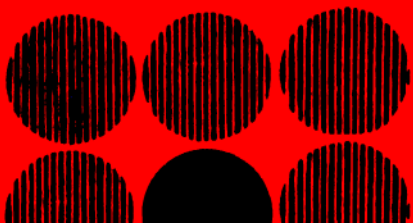


NIGEL GRANT



soviet education



Soviet Education

NIGEL GRANT



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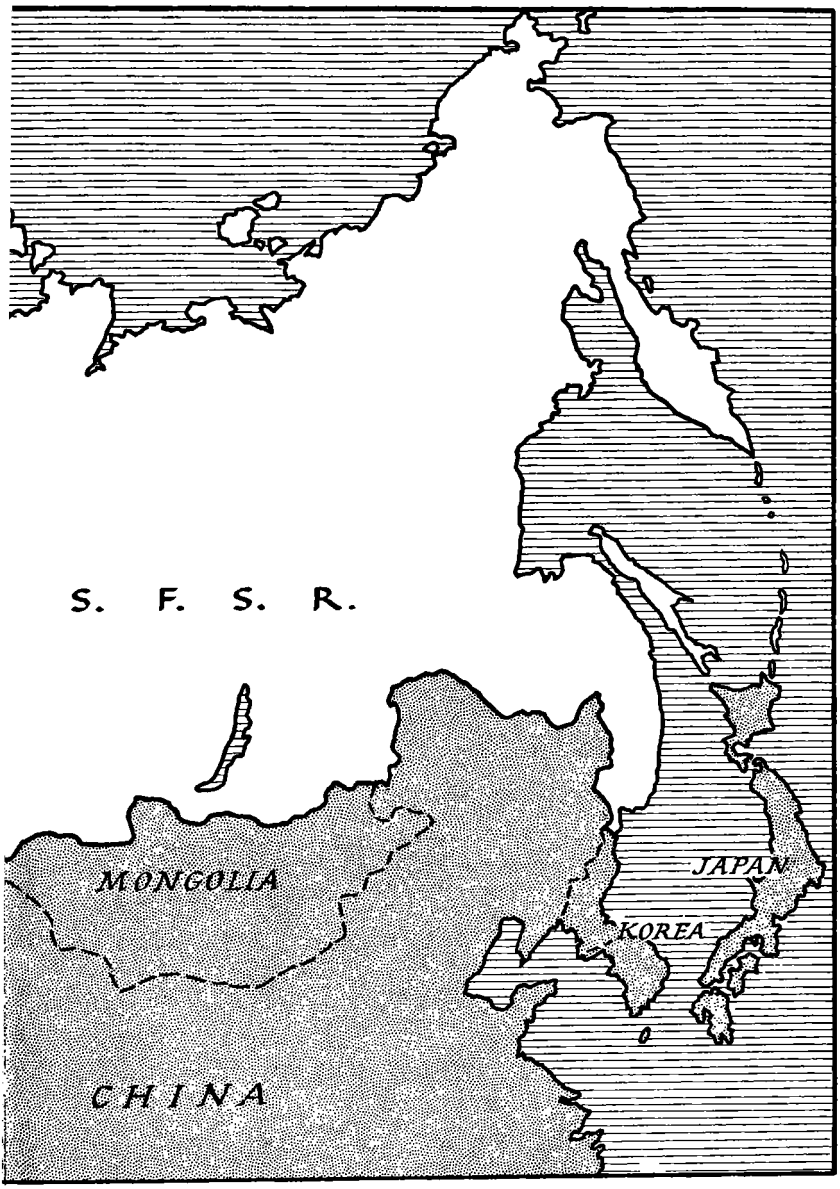
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Preface

This book seeks to present a bird's-eye view of Soviet education today. For the most part, I have tried to concentrate on the facts and keep conclusions to a minimum; but since it is almost impossible to write on any aspect of life in the U.S.S.R. without touching on the controversial, and since facts can be called in question no less than conclusions, it would be as well to declare my sources at this stage. As well as making use of the accounts of others who have recently been to the U.S.S.R., I have drawn on my own impressions of schools and colleges in Moscow and Leningrad in September 1962. During this time I watched lessons, visited many kinds of educational establishment, and had many discussions with teachers, lecturers, professors, pupils, students, and educational officials. Most of these meetings were officially arranged, but others which arose from chance meetings were both informal and informative.

But this is of minor importance. The major cities are in many ways untypical of the U.S.S.R. at large, and there are limits to what the visitor can learn, however fortunate in his contacts. Visits can put flesh on the bones of hard information, but most of this has to be obtained by other means. The most important is reading. There is a wide range of Soviet material available in this country—books, specialist journals, and articles in the general Press; all these can yield a great deal of information, not only about what the system is supposed to do, but about many of the problems and shortcomings as well. I have also used the writings of British and American observers, many of which are painstakingly thorough. Taking Soviet and Western sources together, there is enough material on education in the U.S.S.R. to fill several books the size of this.

The information is nevertheless incomplete, and sooner or later the investigator is faced with some uncomfortable gaps in his knowledge. There is usually no problem in finding out what

is supposed to happen in the schools; it is usually easy enough to find *some* cases where practice does not measure up to the theory. But it can be extremely difficult to discover how widespread the shortcomings are, and collecting complaints can give just as misleading an impression as taking the official handouts at face value. Every statement has to be checked against something else, and still there are gaps in the picture. I have tried to remedy this where possible by piecing together clues from various sources, by reading between the lines, by picking the brains of friends and colleagues, and sometimes by falling back on my own general impressions. This is the main reason for sticking to facts; and where there is some uncertainty about the facts, I have tried to show in the text that the matter is still open to question.

My task has been made much easier by many people who, directly or in the course of conversations and discussions, have supplied material that has found its way into this book. I should like to express my indebtedness to the teachers, schoolchildren, lecturers, students, and officials in the U.S.S.R. whom I watched in action and who showed themselves extremely helpful in the face of often lengthy questioning; to Miss I. M. Walker, of Hamilton Academy, for information about teachers gleaned from *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*; to Miss Jessie Buttberg, of Jordanhill College of Education, Glasgow, and Harry Milne, of Edinburgh, for information about teacher training; to David Paterson, of Paisley Technical College, for information on professional and technical education; to Professor Stanley Nisbet, of Glasgow University, for information on moral education, discipline, and many other topics. Special thanks are due to J. Miller and J. A. Newth, of Glasgow University Institute of Soviet and East European Studies, for reading the book in manuscript and offering many valuable corrections and criticisms, and through whose department much of the factual matter was obtained. Responsibility for the use to which any information has been put, and for any opinions expressed, is entirely my own.

Glasgow
February 1965

N.G.

1 Introduction: The Background to the System

Problems and Handicaps

Few things tell us so much about a country as its schools. In them we can see one of the most important processes of any nation—yesterday's traditions and today's policies moulding and developing the citizens of tomorrow.

It took the Sputnik and its successors to drive home to many people in the West how far the Russians have come in technology from their recent backward state. But the importance of education in the U.S.S.R. goes far beyond rocketry and space navigation; the aim of the Soviet authorities has always been the building of a new kind of society, and they have used the educational system, deliberately and consciously, as a means of attaining this goal. It is, therefore, designed not merely as a machine for the production of scientists, engineers, and technicians, but as an instrument of mass education from which the younger generation gain not only their formal learning, but their social, moral, and political ideas as well. If we want to understand what makes the Soviet Union tick, one of the most profitable ways is to watch what is happening in its schools.

Whether we regard the U.S.S.R. with fear, admiration, or regret, or any mixture of these, we must beware of jumping to conclusions. Educational systems never exist in a vacuum, but are shaped and influenced by the conditions and needs of the societies in which they function. Foreign observers inevitably must pass judgement on what they see, but in doing so they have to avoid making too glib or superficial comparisons with practices and concepts peculiar to their own system. This is particularly true of the Westerner looking at education in the U.S.S.R. Their outlooks are worlds apart, and it is surely futile

to apply uncritically to schools in Moscow or Novosibirsk standards more appropriate to London or North Berwick. In the first place, Soviet education is designed for purposes alien to ours, as we shall examine at greater length later. Secondly, the Soviet educational system as it is today was created in the face of handicaps on a scale that it is hard for us in this country to imagine. These drawbacks did much to give the system its present shape, and on that count alone call for our attention. Further, having regard to them should help not only our understanding of Soviet education, but our evaluation of it. Let us therefore take a look at some of the most important of these.

Lands and Peoples

The very geography of the country must have proved something of a hindrance to any régime attempting to achieve universal education. The U.S.S.R. covers an area of nearly nine million square miles, including almost every kind of climatic variation from sub-tropical to polar in its enormous sweep of territory from the deserts of Central Asia to the Arctic, from the Black Sea and the Baltic to the Pacific Ocean. Much of this area is extremely thinly populated, especially in Central Asia and the north. Too much should not be made of purely geographical factors, which should come to matter progressively less as communications continue to improve. But this must have been a much greater handicap in the early days before fast widespread air transport; and even now there must be difficulties in organizing a school system where the pupils of one school have to come a long way, where distance and weather can interfere with travel and communications, and where extremes of climate and seasonal variations upset what would be regarded elsewhere as the normal routine of the school year. For example, cities like Moscow and Leningrad have little apparent difficulty in getting a reasonable supply of teachers, but things are rather different when schools have to be staffed in areas that lie remote not only from the major cities of the country, but from any kind of town whatever, or where the rigours of climate make normal life more difficult still. The pitiless winter weather is not the only problem; in many places the spring thaw can reduce the countryside to a sea of mud for many weeks. The development of transport has a long way to go before considerations of this kind can be regarded as unimportant.

her drawback is the size and variety of the population. ıre about 225 million people in the U.S.S.R., and large 's alone can be an obstacle to keeping a universal educa- ystem running smoothly over such a big area. But the further complicated by the fact that these 225 millions se over a hundred distinct nationalities,[1] each with its nguage, customs, and culture. In language alone the is one of bewildering complexity: newspapers[2] are pub- n no less than sixty-five different tongues, some of which ıeir own scripts.[3] Each of the fifteen Union Republics own official language. Ukrainian and Byelorussian are ly very similar to Russian, but most of them, such as Turkmen, Estonian, Latvian, Armenian, Georgian, e like, have little or no affinities with Russian at all.[4] r, many of the Union Republics contain sizeable national ies within their own frontiers, such as the Abkhazians uth Ossetians in Georgia, Nakhichevan and Nagorny kh people in Azerbaidzhan, or, in the R.S.F.S.R. (the ı Federation, the major Union Republic), a patchwork of nationalities including Bashkirs, Daghestanians, ns, Kalmyks, Tatars, Chuvash, Yakutis, Udmurts, and others. These minorities are variously organized into omous Soviet Socialist Republics' (A.S.S.R.s), 'Autono- egions', or 'National Areas' within the larger units of the Republics. The Russian language, though more widely than any other and used as the official language of the ı Federation and the U.S.S.R., is the mother tongue of lf the population of the entire country.

mixture of peoples and babel of tongues would be an e in the way of any educational system, especially a uni- stem as conceived by the Soviet régime. One possible n would have been complete Russification of the whole y, but this was rejected by the Soviet government right ıe beginning of the revolution. The Constitution of the R. has a great deal to say about racial equality; racial or l discrimination is declared (Article 123) to be an offence ıble by law, and the use of the native tongue is elsewhere teed in the lawcourts, Soviets, and the like, in all the Republics and their subdivisions. 'Instruction in schools ıative language' is specifically laid down (Article 121) as ıental. It is well known that on many matters the

Constitution says one thing while something quite different is practised, but in this respect at least it does appear to be carried into effect. Children are taught in their own language in the schools,[5] and in many places at university level as well.

This in itself adds complications, since Russian, the official language of the U.S.S.R., has to be learned too. In Georgia, where special pains are taken to ensure that the ancient native language and culture do not suffer as a result, children stay one year longer at school than do their Russian counterparts. In other minority republics either Russian or the native language is liable to be treated less than adequately. The existence of minorities within minorities complicates things even further, as does the policy of the authorities of including a non-Soviet foreign language in all school curricula. The burden of learning thus placed on the children is part of the price of trying to run a school system to cater for the needs of national groups, and at the same time trying to educate them as citizens of the Soviet Union as a whole.

Variety and confusion apart, the prospect facing the Soviet authorities after the revolution was distinctly unpromising. The Russian Empire was backward in education as in most things. Literacy, which can be taken as a fair guide to a nation's minimum educational level, has been variously estimated, but was probably not much above thirty per cent over the entire country. In European Russia, things were rather better; living standards were higher, the population was more westernized than elsewhere, and the innovations of Peter the Great and others had borne some fruit. In spite of many black spots, where the masses of the peasantry were termed 'dark' or benighted, there had been enough voluntary effort to raise literacy west of the Urals and the Volga to about forty per cent over the whole area—much less in the countryside, but higher in the towns. Schooling in the major cities could, at its best, bear comparison with that of the highest quality in Europe, but this was available only to a small minority. Generally, the educational picture in Western Russia was extremely patchy, and on the whole lagged well behind most of Central and Western Europe.

In the Asian and Northern areas, however, the situation was appalling. Most of the Arctic peoples still lived in Stone Age conditions. In 1914, Tadzhikistan had ten elementary schools,

thirteen teachers, and a literacy rate of one half of one per cent; Turkmenia had fifty-eight schools, literacy reaching the level of 0.7 per cent; of the population of Uzbekistan, which includes such ancient cities as Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand, only two per cent were literate; in Georgia, for all its relative prosperity and ancient culture, only twenty per cent of the people were able to read and write. As for Kirghizia, it was in an even worse plight; it had to start from nothing, lacking even a written language. In the other eastern parts of the Empire the picture was much the same,[6] bearing more resemblance to the rest of the land-mass of Asia than to the European part of the country.

This legacy of backwardness would have been bad enough for any government, let alone one as ambitious as the Soviet; but the birth-pangs of the revolution and the havoc of war served to make things even worse.

Revolution and War

The Soviet Union came into being after three years of war had exhausted Russia, thrown her into the convulsions of the revolution of 1917, and shorn her of vast tracts of her richest land at the humiliating Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. But worse was still to come; even before the Germans were forced to withdraw from the Ukraine in 1918, civil war broke out. It went on steadily until 1921, and was not completely over until the following year. During that time the Red and White armies fought it out on several fronts throughout the country, while several foreign nations, including Britain, France, the U.S.A., Poland, Japan, and an army of expatriate Czecholovaks, intervened in the struggle. Hostilities between the intervening powers and the Soviet government were confused and spasmodic, punctuated by uneasy truces and ambiguous diplomatic overtures. The conflict was sometimes direct and open, sometimes taking the form of military and financial aid to approved régimes by the Allies. The position was further complicated by several nations entering or quitting the war as policy or special interest dictated. But during much of this time the Soviet government was fighting for its existence, and the war between the Reds and the Whites went on, with great ruthlessness on both sides, to the bitter end. When the dust settled, the Soviet authorities found themselves in power in a country that had been pushed even farther back into poverty and backwardness.

The destruction of life and property had been enormous (to say nothing of the legacy of mistrust that lingers even today). Nor was it just a question of war devastation, battle casualties, or the loss of those who fell victim to terror and counter-terror; many regions had undergone several changes of régime, Red and White, and in this general atmosphere of political and social upheaval, of anxiety and uncertainty about the future, any attempt to come seriously to grips with the deep-seated educational problems was well-nigh impossible. This had to wait for more settled conditions, and was still bound to be a slow process. As late as 1926, forty-two per cent were still illiterate in European Russia (which contained the bulk of the population); the minority areas were much worse—in Azerbaidzhan, for example, the figure was seventy-five per cent.[7] Even in something as fundamental as literacy, the surface of the problem had barely been scratched.

In the years that followed, the difficulties in the way of educating the entire nation were obvious enough. At the same time, they were a constant reminder of the need for action, if the aim of the Soviet government was to be realized. The task of building from the ruins of the Russian Empire a modern, industrial, and socialist society was pushed on with a ruthlessness—and at a human cost—that is well known. But no measure of ruthless determination could in itself be enough; for the success of such projects as the Five Year Plans, the authorities depended on educational development no less than on the mustering of manpower and economic resources. There had to be a new force of engineers, scientists, technicians of all kinds. The upheavals of the revolution had thinned the ranks of the Russian intelligentsia, which had to be reinforced and expanded. Industrial development needed more skilled workers of all kinds. No possible source of talent could be left untapped, and the only way of meeting these needs was by the rapid development of a planned system of mass education. The building of the Soviet society also demanded the energetic propagation of communist ideas, and the schools were used for this too—directly as vehicles for the teaching of loyalty to the régime, and indirectly in providing the literacy necessary for the dissemination of propaganda by newspaper, broadsheet, and poster.

The drive towards industrialization was, therefore, accompanied by determined efforts to extend and improve the school

system at all levels. The needs of the developing Soviet society were regarded as paramount. During the 1920s there had been a surge of experimentation in education; John Dewey's activity and project methods, the Dalton assignment plan, Western 'progressive' techniques of all kinds found their way into the Soviet schools. But this did not last for long; the needs of the national economy, the call for ever-increasing efficiency, and the general tightening-up of society at large brought in a reaction. By the 1930s a halt had been called to what were described, rather unjustly, as 'irresponsible experiments' in the schools, and the Stalin era reimposed a strict routine of examinations, formal teaching, and strict classroom discipline on the traditional Continental model. This involved the reintroduction of many features of pre-revolutionary schooling, but was applied on a mass scale and geared to the political needs of the Soviet state and the Communist Party. By 1939 the literacy rate had risen to eighty-one per cent, and the production of specialists and skilled personnel was increasing rapidly.

Then, in 1941, Hitler's armies invaded the U.S.S.R., striking deep into the country to the very outskirts of Moscow and Leningrad, to the Volga and the Caucasus, before they were finally driven out. Great areas in the west were devastated, including most of the Ukraine and much of European Russia. Loss of life has been estimated at over 35 millions, military and civil, including deaths from starvation and disease. Quite apart from the dislocation caused, the loss of teachers, and the diversion of resources to the war effort, 82,000 schools were totally destroyed—a loss to the country of 15 million school places.

In spite of the original handicaps in 1917, however, and in the face of massive setbacks like the Second World War, much has been accomplished. Literacy is now virtually universal. (So it is claimed by Soviet and UNESCO figures; some observers have calculated that there is five to ten per cent illiteracy at the present time, but even this is small in the circumstances.) There has been a spectacular rise in educational provision at all levels from nursery to university. Basic education is free and compulsory up to the age of fifteen,[8] and it is claimed that the majority of young people pursue their schooling (still free) well beyond this. In higher education the U.S.S.R. has raised its number of students to over twenty times the pre-revolutionary figure; judging from the standard of scientific work, Soviet

higher education and research can more than stand comparison with that of the West.

By any standards an achievement on this scale in forty-eight years would be impressive enough. When we remember that with the losses and destruction of war the time was in effect very much shorter, we can see that whatever reservations we may have about many features of the educational system, it commands our closest attention.

It will be seen later that rigidity and central control is an outstanding feature of education in the U.S.S.R. This is due in part to its being guided to political ends, in part to the fact that the revolution inherited a long-standing centralizing tradition. Tsarist Russia had an extensive system of schools run by voluntary bodies, which was not centrally controlled. However, the official system was, and it was from this that Soviet education grew. To expect the individual stress that we in this country claim as a central characteristic of our system would be unrealistic—prescription from the centre followed automatically. It is doubtless true that this suited the Soviet leaders well enough, and they certainly made use of it, but it was not their invention. Useful to the communist régime though it was, tight centralization had its origins in the habits and traditions of Tsarist Russia. Revolutions have a tendency to take their colour from the powers they overthrow.

To those accustomed to the comparative freedom and flexibility of the school systems in Britain, the centralization and uniformity of the Soviet system seems undesirable, even repellent (though it would seem less remarkable to a teacher or pupil in France). But the situations are not comparable; our pattern of gradual reform (with periods of marking time) would have made little impression on problems as great as those facing the U.S.S.R. When all the circumstances are considered, it is extremely doubtful if such spectacular advances could have been made in any other way.

Education and Ideology

Education in the U.S.S.R. is primarily a political tool for the construction of a communist society. It has of course other purposes and other effects, but they are of secondary importance; from the first decrees on education after the October

Revolution to the most recent legislation, educational policy has always been conceived in the light of social and political requirements, to which all other considerations must be subordinate. 'Without teaching there is no knowledge,' Lenin once remarked, 'and without knowledge there is no communism.' The official point of view, put by V. P. Yelyutin (Minister of Higher Education in the U.S.S.R.) in 1959 in terms very like many other policy statements on educational aims, can be taken as typical:

> The role of Soviet education is to assist in the building of a communist society, in shaping the materialist world outlook of the students, equipping them with a good grounding in the different fields of knowledge and preparing them for socially useful work.[9]

In a policy statement in November 1958 the Central Committee of the Communist Party, emphasizing the question of attitudes, put it like this:

> Upbringing must inculcate in the schoolchildren a love of knowledge and of work, and respect for people who work; it must shape the communist world outlook of the pupils and rear them in the spirit of communist morality and of boundless loyalty to the country and the people, and in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.[10]

What emerges from the often turgid prose of official statements is that the skills, knowledge, and attitudes imparted in the schools are determined by the needs of Soviet society in a conscious and deliberate way. Soviet society needs an ever-improved and ever-expanding skilled labour force; consequently vocational training and guidance are expanded. Soviet society (like all expanding industrial societies) needs a high degree of literacy and general culture; therefore the schools strive to impart universal competence in the basic skills and whet the children's cultural appetites, helped by the traditional Russian veneration for learning and the arts. Further, Soviet society (or its leaders) requires 'political awareness' in the mass of the population. This is more than mere conformity, which usually comes more easily through ignorance. Dumb acquiescence will not do; what is wanted is conformity based on knowledge and study of political theory, conformity in the positive sense. The educational system accordingly seeks to put over the political attitudes of the Communist Party and the theories of Marxism-Leninism. It does not seem to have had much success in

obtaining widespread understanding of political theory, judging by the frequency of official complaints; but it has managed to instil a high degree of loyalty, in public at any rate, to the régime.

Not only do the Soviet authorities openly declare the political aims of their educational system, they deny emphatically that it could or should be otherwise. From the Soviet standpoint the basic issue is simple, leaving aside the emotional overtones of words like 'indoctrination' and 'propaganda', which they regard as irrelevant. They take the view that education must function according to the needs of society, and that theirs is by definition a socialist society moving towards communism, a society which needs trained citizens who will all be able—and willing—to continue with the job of social transformation. Education must therefore be political in nature, since this is a political task. As Khrushchov put it at the Twenty-first Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 'To arrive at communism, that most fair and perfect society . . . we must start right now educating the man of the future.'

As for the claims of other systems to be non-political in aim, they are dismissed, in Lenin's words, as 'hypocrisy and lies'. Most non-communist countries teach religion in their schools, that is, they indoctrinate the pupils with a particular world outlook; also, they might add, national traditions and patriotic attitudes are taught everywhere, openly or covertly. In the Soviet view, their own kind of indoctrination is franker, more thorough, and embraces a wider field of teaching than that of other systems, but they would deny that the process of indoctrination itself is a monopoly of the communist approach to education.

Widespread and thorough it certainly is. Directly and indirectly, the communist viewpoint is put over at every stage of schooling, and reinforced by the other media of communication outside the schools, such as the theatre, films, radio, television, and the Press, while the youth organizations act as a link between the school and the world outside.

Direct systematic instruction in political doctrine is not greatly in evidence in the programmes of the younger classes in the schools, though older children have a course of 'Social Studies' (*Obshchestvovedenie*), a fairly extensive study of the various aspects of Marxist-Leninist theory.[11] In higher education, however, it plays a big part; all students, whatever they

are studying and whatever kind of institute they attend, must attend classes in philosophy and theory of history, the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the principles of political economy (all from the Marxist standpoint, of course). They must also pass examinations in these subjects, which take up a minor yet substantial part of their curricular time. Thus it is ensured that all graduates emerge from their courses not only as highly trained specialists, but, in theory at least, briefed in communist theories and ideas.

Throughout the rest of the educational system, the curriculum is saturated with Soviet principles. All subjects, wherever possible, are presented from the Marxist point of view and used to make political points. Literature and history lend themselves readily to this treatment, while in geography and language much can be done through the judicious selection of reading material. The sciences and the fine arts can be pressed into service here too, but in this area the authorities have been soft-pedalling since the death of Stalin; the influence of Lysenko in genetics and Zhdanov in the creative arts, for all the resultant orthodoxy, also produced a creative sterility that the U.S.S.R. could ill afford. The easing off, however, has been only relative, not absolute, and Party control has been sharply reasserted from time to time when it had been felt that liberalization has gone too far. Even when 'dogmatism' is most scathingly condemned, the authorities still maintain the principle that there is an ideologically 'correct' approach to every field of knowledge and study. Moral education too is presented on the basis of comradeship, loyalty to the group, and understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Soviet citizen. Even in sport and physical education the point is constantly made that physical fitness is a duty of the future builder of communism, to enable him to work better for the good of the community.

Such close links between curriculum and political theory tend, of course, to put inquiry into a straitjacket, an inherent danger in all organized creeds, political or otherwise. It also increases the headaches of school administrators, officials, and teachers; political lines change, sometimes abruptly, and when they do they bring in their wake considerable upheavals at school level. During the heyday of Stalin's ascendancy, the 'cult of personality' was closely reflected in textbooks and lessons throughout the country. When Stalin was posthumously toppled

from his pedestal, the new line of policy led to drastic revisions in the material used in the schools. In 1956, for example, there were no history examinations for final-year school pupils, the old textbook having been withdrawn and the new being still in the course of preparation. The gap was filled partly by teaching without a text, but not sufficiently to make a uniform examination possible. For the same reason, the teaching of literature was temporarily curtailed farther down the school while revision of texts was being carried out. Changes of policy, even fairly minor ones, keep the textbook writers busy; the Soviet schools seem to be full of brand-new books, especially for such potentially thorny subjects as the history of the U.S.S.R. This is possibly also one reason for the stress on refresher courses for teachers.

In extra-curricular activities too, political content is prominent. Slogans, posters, wall-newspapers, statues, and portraits of leaders meet the eye everywhere in the schools. Slogans and poster themes may be directly political, such as 'Forward to the building of communism' or 'We must study and work as Lenin taught'; or patriotic, such as 'Glory to the Soviet people—a people of heroes!' There are many which exhort children to study hard and be a credit to the community, others which blazon protestations of peace and friendship over the school walls. A favourite theme, variously illustrated, is '*Miru mir!*'—'Peace to the world', a play on words arising from the fact that the Russian word *mir* means either 'world' or 'peace'. Portraits of Brezhnev, Kosygin, Mikoyan and others are sometimes seen, as were those of Khrushchov before his fall from power in October 1964, but with none of the ubiquity of Stalin before the Twentieth Congress. Lenin, however, is everywhere, in a great variety of pictures showing him speaking, writing, pondering, patting children on the head, pointing dramatically into the future, or just looking out from a wall swathed in red drapery. Many schools have a room or hall 'dedicated to Lenin' which they use for meetings and displays; Leningrad School No. 290, for example, has in its Lenin Hall exhibits of photographs illustrating the life of Lenin, representations of Lenin in the theatre and the cinema, together with letters and messages from actors who had played the part. Busts, full-size statues, and plaques bearing his utterances abound. In the classroom and out of it, the Soviet schoolchild is never far from reminders of the ideas and aims of the régime and its founder.

In many countries, including our own, there is some degree of conflict between the influence of the school and that of outside agencies, such as television. In the U.S.S.R. this is not the case; since the media of mass communication are just as subject as the schools to control by government and Party, they reinforce what is taught in the classroom instead of clashing with it. Much labour and money is lavished on the theatre, films, papers, museums, and the like, particular attention being paid to young people. The authorities go so far as to run hundreds of special children's theatres, cinemas, cultural centres, and camps, and, through the youth organizations, newspapers as well. The youth movements' functions, as we shall see, are not purely political, especially the sections for younger children (the Pioneers), but in their job of attending to various leisure activities they contrive to convey the political message incidentally, by methods much the same as those of the schools themselves. By their close links with the schools, the organizations become in effect a branch of the educational system. The children, in their leisure as in their work, are thus kept close to the social and political influences considered suitable by the Soviet régime.

One aspect of this orientation of education is the attitude taken towards religion. Official policy in the U.S.S.R. has always been hostile towards religion, and has been put into effect by devices ranging from almost complete proscription to bare tolerance combined with anti-religious propaganda of varying degrees of virulence. This is partly for ideological reasons. Marxist theory regards all supernatural religion as 'opium of the people', a device to distract the masses from the problems of this world by getting them to concentrate on hopes of better things in the next. Theory seemed to be confirmed in practice by the behaviour of the Russian Orthodox Church. Revolutionaries saw the Church as a heavily committed ally of Tsarism, acting as a 'spiritual cloak for the landlords' as one of them put it. Also, when the revolution broke out the official leadership of the Church, under Patriarch Tikhon, took sides against the Soviet government, doing anything within its very limited power towards its overthrow. Since the Church had thus let itself be identified not only with reaction in the past but with counter-revolution and intervention in the present, the anti-religious reaction was perhaps inevitable, even without Marxist theory to back it up.

The churches in the Soviet Union have had their ups and downs since then. During the Second World War there was an increase in toleration, to which the religious leaders responded by throwing the weight of their patriotic exhortations into the war effort. At the present time, the position is roughly a combination of toleration and official discouragement; the Constitution (Article 124) states that 'Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens'. Freedom of pro-religious propaganda is not mentioned, and though religious observances take place quite freely, at least in the major cities, there are still many indirect pressures, and adherence to any church is likely to be a considerable drawback to the ambitious. From time to time, if church-going appears to be on the increase, anti-religious propaganda is stepped up in the Press and the schools. As far as religious education is concerned, this is completely divorced from the classroom; apart from a few church-run seminaries for the training of priests, education and religion never come together. The aforementioned article of the Constitution declares the separation of state and church, church and school. Religious instruction is therefore not given in the schools at all, and parents who want it must make their own individual arrangements through their own churches in their own time.

The values and attitudes that pervade Soviet education are not to be explained by Marxism-Leninism alone. For all its insistence on looking to the future and its stress on 'proletarian internationalism', the system has strong roots in the traditions of the Russian Empire. 'Soviet patriotism' is not only 'love of the socialist motherland'—it contains a strong tinge of straight Russian nationalism as well. National consciousness, once suspect as a bourgeois phenomenon, is now respectable. The Second World War is referred to as 'The Great Patriotic War'. The minority republics are exhorted to develop cultures 'national in form and socialist in content'. Although any comparisons drawn between the old régime and the new are inevitably flattering to the Soviet era, great emphasis is laid on certain 'positive' achievements of the past, and on the virtues of the Russian people in general. In the teaching of history and literature, national heroes are very much to the fore; Pushkin and Chekhov, Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky lead a galaxy of stars venerated for their services to the arts in Russia; Peter the

Great and Ivan the Terrible, among many other princes, make up for their ideological failings by their contributions to the well-being, influence, and power of Russia in the past. In the sciences, past achievements (real or claimed) of Russian inventors are played up to an extent that often causes a good deal of amusement in the West. Far from despising national sentiment, the Soviet authorities use it as a prop for securing further loyalty to the régime, with considerable success. Some observers[12] have suggested that the high degree of commitment among young people is due more to patriotic pride than to doctrinal conviction.

It is this political direction of the Soviet educational system that gives it its special character and largely determines its form. Details of school administration, organization, and curriculum have changed, often radically, in the years since the revolution, but the salient features have remained constant throughout: it has always been a *mass* system and a *planned* system, subject to political control and closely supervised.

The mass character of Soviet education is, clearly, a reflection of its social aims. These would be unattainable if education were regarded as an obstacle race or a sieve for catching the most able and discarding the rest. A highly selective system might conceivably produce the required intelligentsia and specialists, though even this is doubtful—in an industrial society there has to be a large number of technicians for every technologist, and a host of skilled workers for every technician, if their work is to be at all effective. Consequently education has to raise the entire population to as high a level as possible, or the training of specialists is bound to prove futile in practice. Hence the unremitting assault on illiteracy throughout the Soviet period, and the continual efforts to raise the 'cultural level' of the people through the schools, mass communications, and every other method that could be pressed into service.

The Soviet régime, as we have seen, aims higher than mere passive acquiescence, so that for positive political commitment among the masses, mass education is again imperative. 'An illiterate person,' Lenin remarked, 'stands outside; he must first be taught the ABC. Without this, there can be no politics; without this, there are only rumours, gossip, tales, prejudices, but no politics.' Literacy and the highest development of general education are thus regarded as a political necessity for the

government and a civic duty for the individual. It is for this reason that although much has been done in the field of vocational and special education, the authorities—and, to all appearances, public opinion—insist on the system's retaining its mass character. Reforms may bring in more diverse courses for senior pupils, special schools may cater for artists and ballet dancers, but underlying the variations is the stress on providing a basic general education, covering the same ground and on the same terms for all, regardless of background or future occupation. A more diversified and selective system would be regarded with grave suspicion as a barrier to the realization of the political aims of Soviet education, even if it were scholastically more efficient.

A system closely tied to the needs of a developing society must inevitably be carefully planned and coordinated. The Russian intellectual tradition and Marxist theory alike have a horror of improvisation and 'muddling through'. The result is a vast organizational network throughout the country, in education as in other branches of national life; and though complaints of bureaucratic inefficiency and red tape are often heard (more frequently in recent years), it is unlikely that planning as such would be seriously challenged in the U.S.S.R., even by the most severe critics of the particular handling of some particular plan. All aspects of Soviet education are, therefore, planned in detail, from the finance of universities to the curriculum and teaching methods for the elementary classes, from building programmes to admission figures for the colleges. The working of the plans, though some of the details are delegated to local bodies, is watched over by the Ministries of Education of the Union Republics. Organization as well as policy is also under the eye of the Communist Party, locally and nationally. Thus the working of the system is controlled every step of the way.

It is a fair assumption, then, that anything we observe in the Soviet schools will rarely be unofficial or accidental, but will usually have been consciously planned for the purpose of running a system of mass education designed for the rearing of the 'new man' and the building of a communist society. For us, living in a society where so many features of the educational system owe their existence to use and wont rather than any deliberate policy, it is important to bear this in mind when looking at what actually happens in education in the U.S.S.R.

1. Although the 1959 Census lists over 100 nationalities, their numbers vary greatly. Over half of them have under 100,000 members, and about a quarter under 10,000. Variable, too, is their level of cultural development; among the non-Slav peoples, the Georgians and Armenians are outstanding in their possession of ancient and well-established native cultures. At the other extreme are the small tribal groups in the Arctic areas, with native cultures so primitive that they have to lean heavily on Russian models and methods for future development. The Central Asian peoples, such as the Tadzhiks, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Kirghiz, come between the two extremes.

2. Some sources state that newspapers are published in 119 different languages, but the official directory for 1955–60 lists only sixty-five. The extra fifty-four are probably not for internal consumption, but published in non-Soviet languages for export.

3. There are altogether five scripts in use: (1) the Cyrillic alphabet, which is used for Russian and the other Slavonic languages and, with modifications, for the great majority of the other languages as well, major and minor; (2) the Latin alphabet, used for Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian; (3) and (4) Georgian and Armenian have their own scripts; (5) the Hebrew alphabet, also used to write Yiddish.

4. Latvian and Lithuanian have fairly close affinities with the Slavonic group, while Armenian is a far-distant relative. (It belongs to the Indo-European family, but since this includes Persian and the North Indian languages as well as all the tongues of Europe except Basque, Hungarian, Finnish, Estonian, and Lappish, such links are of no great help to the learner.) Turkmen, Uzbek, Kazakh, and many others are similar to Turkish, while Tadzhik is a form of Persian. Languages of the Finnish type are widely represented. Altogether, the minority languages are as mixed a collection as one could find anywhere.

5. Practical difficulties make it impossible for *all* nationalities to be taught in their native language *throughout* their schooling. Complete instruction through all stages is available in Russian, in the languages of the other fourteen Union Republics, and (within the Russian Federation) in Tatar and Bashkir; among the major A.S.S.R. peoples, schooling in the native language is given up to the eighth form (about age fifteen), and among the minor A.S.S.R. groups, only up to the fourth form (age eleven). All instruction thereafter is given in Russian. In the Far North, only the first two forms are taught in their native tongue. Some of the very small linguistic groups still have no written languages of their own, and have to be taught either in Russian or the nearest major vernacular. The main problem is that many of these languages are so primitive in their development, and spoken by so few people, that full-scale instruction in them is simply not feasible.

6. The figures for literacy and school provision in the non-Russian areas are derived from Soviet sources (see, for example, Korolev: *Education in the U.S.S.R.*, pp. 70–6). Some caution is called for on two points:

(1) It is possible that the numbers of schools refer only to European

schools of the colonial type and do not include Muslim schools, for which no figures are available.

(2) It has been suggested that the literacy figures were derived from the writings of Russians before 1914 who were seeking to justify the annexation of these territories by stressing the backwardness of their peoples. They may therefore be underestimates.

Even allowing for some exaggeration, however, there can be no doubt of the general educational backwardness of these areas before the First World War.

7. 1926 Census. Literacy for the entire country was given as fifty-one per cent. The republic with the highest level was the Ukraine, with 57.5 per cent; the lowest was Tadzhikistan, with 3.7 per cent.

8. The system established by the reforms of 1958 provides for compulsory eight-year schooling from seven to fifteen. In some areas the reforms have not yet been put into effect, so that compulsory education may end at fourteen. Even this is not always universally enforced; in the fifties there was evidence of pupils leaving well before the official age, especially in country areas, and recent visitors have found instructors in provincial Pedagogic Institutes concerned about the problem of enforcing compulsory education in the countryside.

9. V. P. Yelyutin, *Higher Education in the USSR*, p. 41 (Soviet Booklet No. 51, London, 1959). 'Materialist world outlook' means here an atheist view of philosophy, not a preoccupation with cash and consumer goods.

10. *Strengthening the Ties of the School with Life, and Further Developing the System of Public Education.* Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers, November 1958. Section 20. (Published in English as *Bringing the Soviet Schools Still Closer to Life*, Soviet Booklet No. 44, London, December 1958.)

11. The course of lessons on the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. was replaced in January 1963 by a new course of 'Social Study' (*Obshchestvovedenie*). The textbook for the course is divided into five sections: (1) 'Elementary Marxism-Leninism', an account of the philosophical bases of communist doctrine; (2) 'Socialism', an outline of the theory of Soviet government and law; (3) 'The Communist Party', dealing with the Party's organization and role; (4) 'From Socialism to Communism', an outline of the aims and problems of the 1961 Party programme; (5) 'The Twentieth Century—the Century of the Triumph of Communism', a survey of world revolutionary and anti-colonial movements. The general emphasis of the course is on putting Party policy in its theoretical setting in terms that can be readily grasped by seventeen-year-old pupils.

The prescribed textbook is: *Obshchestvovedenie: uchebnik dlya vypusknogo klassa srednei shkoly i srednikh spetsialnykh zavedenii*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1962.

12. Bereday, Brickman, and Read, *The Changing Soviet School*, p. 13.

2 General Characteristics: I

Central Control

One of the most prominent features of Soviet education, which highlights its differences from other large-scale systems of mass education, is the extent of tight control exercised by the central authorities, and the degree of uniformity enforced in principle and practice through the length and breadth of the Soviet Union. In such a vast and varied country there are naturally some local differences, and there are also plenty of instances of things happening at school level without the knowledge or approval of the higher authorities; given the extent and complexity of the chain of command, it could hardly be otherwise. In the formulation of basic policy, however, and to a considerable extent in the details of school practice, the authorities in Moscow keep a firm grip on what happens in schools and colleges from Riga to Vladivostok.

The reasons for this concentration of power in a few hands are not far to seek. In the years immediately following the revolution, the need for quick results in education was so desperate and obvious that techniques of gradualism and *laissez faire* were out of the question if anything was to be done at all. The crying need, as we have seen, was for mobilization of all resources, which meant that planning was a must; this in turn meant careful coordination, hence the high degree of central control that still exists. Nor was this in any way remarkable at the time; the habit of prescription from the top was so deeply engrained in the traditional Russian ways of thinking that it can be doubted if devolution and decentralization were ever seriously considered. Further, this fitted (and still fits) the single-mindedness of Soviet educational aims. Education, in the

official view, must serve the needs, political and otherwise, of Soviet society, as interpreted by the Communist Party. If the system is to reflect closely enough the development and shifts of government policy, it has to be kept firmly in the hands of the political authorities. From time to time there have been changes of detail, some matters being left to local bodies to work out more specifically; but the basic assumption that the bulk of policy-making, and the residue of power should rest in the keeping of the central authorities, has never been seriously challenged. Any departure from this principle would be stigmatized as nothing better than anarchy.

Surprisingly enough, there is no central authority in the form of a ministry of education for the whole of the U.S.S.R. There is an all-Union Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, and an all-Union Ministry of Culture (which deals with matters that could be termed educational in the less formal sense), but the highest ministries for the running of the school system are found only at republic level. Thus we are faced with the apparent contradiction that one of the most highly-centralized systems on earth has no central ministry of education.

In practice, this makes little difference. Ministries are, after all, executive bodies, not the fountainheads of policy or legislation. State power in the U.S.S.R. lies, in theory, with the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.; when it is not in session, which is most of the time, the Council of Ministers exercises power on its behalf. This in turn is effectively controlled by the central organs of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the real source of policy in education as in other things. It therefore matters little whether ministries are centralized or not; the Party is.

Major decisions on policy, then, are made by the central organs of the Party, often after trying out the ideas first by flying kites in the form of debates in the Press or discussions at meetings, thereby gaining some idea of the state of opinion on the matter in hand. (This was done over the issue of co-education in 1954, for example, and again over the changes in the school system in 1958.) When the decisions have been taken they are passed on to the Supreme Soviet, which makes them law, a theoretically necessary but purely formal step. The Council of Ministers, acting on behalf of the Supreme Soviet, passes the directives down the line. Where all-Union ministries

are involved (such as Higher Education, Culture, Public Health, and the like), it is merely a matter of passing the decisions directly to the appropriate minister for implementation. In the case of the ordinary school system, this has to be done through the ministers of public education of the constituent republics. Officially there are channels to be gone through in the form of the republican Supreme Soviets and their Councils of Ministers, but in practice this is not greatly different from direct instruction.

Each of the fifteen Union Republics has a minister of education who is thus briefed, usually in great detail. There are in addition twenty 'Autonomous Republics', with ministries of their own; most of these are inside the Russian Federation (the R.S.F.S.R.), the rest being minority members of other republics. The decisions of the central authorities are thus channelled through thirty-five ministerial bodies, with the Communist Party as an effective nation-wide link and coordinator. In practice, the Ministry of Education of the R.S.F.S.R., in conjunction with the Russian Academy of Pedagogic Sciences, works out most of the details for the translation of policy into practice, and acts as a pace-setter for the others. The republican ministries follow suit, making such changes as local conditions demand; these are usually minor variations made with the approval of the Party. From ministerial level command is passed on to provincial or city departments of education, then to district departments, and finally to school directors and teachers. The farther down the chain one goes, the greater the amount of detail laid down for the conduct of the schools. By the time it comes to the teacher, the area of personal discretion is very small. Not only basic policy, but the content of the curriculum, schemes of work, teaching methods, and the like are prescribed for the teacher in considerable detail.

One result of this system is a high degree of uniformity all over the country. Whether as a result of direction or emulation, schools, textbooks, curricula, and teaching methods are closely similar throughout the U.S.S.R. With few differences children in, say, the fifth form in an eight-year school in places as far apart as Moscow and Magnitogorsk, Tashkent and Tallinn, wear the same uniforms, observe the same rules of behaviour, and study the same subjects from the same textbooks at the same pace. When they complete their course at the age of fifteen, the

alternatives available for the next stage of their education are substantially the same wherever they may be.

There are some variations, of course, official, and otherwise. The main difference is one of language; similar though they may be in other respects, the native-language schools[1] in Tashkent or Tbilisi will give instruction in Uzbek or Georgian rather than in Russian. This in turn often leads to other changes because of the extra burden of learning Russian as well; in Georgia (an extreme case) children stay at school a year longer than their Russian counterparts largely for this reason. There are also minor differences in textbooks and curricula from one republic to another. Textbooks in the non-Russian republics are usually straight translations of those in use in the R.S.F.S.R., but not infrequently the republics have their own when local conditions make this necessary, as with the treatment of local history, for example. Further, official policy encourages the national cultures of the several minorities, so that such subjects as art, music, literature, and the like are presented with a strong bias towards the national idiom. Even if the sciences are similarly taught throughout the country, then, singing and painting are liable to vary strikingly from place to place.

Even within the republics further variations can be found. All eight-year schools teach one foreign language to all their pupils, but the languages offered vary. Most schools teach English or German, with French and Spanish lagging behind in popularity.[2] Again, although the normal practice is to begin a foreign language at the age of eleven or thereabouts, there is an increasing number of schools where it starts at the age of eight, the language being used as soon as possible as the medium of instruction in other subjects (see page 81). Most schools are day schools, but boarding schools and 'extended day schools' exist alongside them. There are also certain special schools, pilot schemes, experimental schools, and other variants all over the country. Generally, the picture of Soviet schooling is not quite as uniform as it might appear at first.

None the less, these variations, though real, are minor—the basic curriculum and the basic aims of education remain pretty constant throughout. Also, the aforementioned variations are there at the behest of the central authorities, not because someone at local level has been showing some initiative and originality in trying out new ideas. In the case of pilot schemes, they

are frequently set up in a few places by the central authorities in order to try out something before deciding whether to apply it to the system as a whole. The present eight-year school programme, for instance, was tested in fifty selected schools in the R.S.F.S.R. from September 1957, but was not put into effect generally until the reforms of 1958.

From the point of view of the individual child, there are ways in which he can vary his own course of study to some extent. In regular school time there are practically no options, no dropping of subjects and taking up extras. But it is possible for a child to *add* to his curriculum outside school hours through the 'circles' or clubs run by the youth organizations. Except where the school still works in shifts, afternoons are mostly free; if he can find a few others similarly inclined, the pupil may study another language or more art or music or anything else from a wide range of activities in this extra time, either in the school or at a Pioneer Palace or Centre. But this is an extra. The basic programme of the school remains uniform for all.

Unofficially, too, there are some breaks in the picture of nationwide sameness. Evasions of regulations are under constant fire in the educational Press, which implies that they are common. Old methods of teaching languages, for instance, prove difficult to legislate out of existence; there is evidence that in some of the more remote areas the full teaching programmes are not always realized because of shortage of adequate facilities; the maximum size of classes tends to be a hope rather than a reality; official standards of building maintenance are not always observed; there are even cases of children being allowed to leave school and take jobs at the age of fourteen or less, although the legal leaving age is fifteen. In education as in general living standards, there is still a marked disparity between town and country. Country schools are usually much worse off than city schools for buildings, equipment, and supply of teachers; communications are often difficult, and supplies are liable to be delayed. Further, the choice of educational facilities, perhaps inevitably, is much more limited in the countryside—where, it should be remembered, half the population of the U.S.S.R. still lives. A great deal has yet to be done before the peasant's child can hope to have educational opportunities on a par with the child of the urban worker. This is, perhaps, their greatest single problem.

Just how big the gap is between theory and practice is almost impossible for the observer to judge, beyond noting reports and complaints in the Soviet Press. It is clear, however, that most variations from the set pattern exist because the central authorities do not always manage to have their edicts translated into practice, and that whenever possible they are brought into line.

Departures from the pattern laid down by the central authorities, then, may exist with official approval, such as language differences or experimental schools. Sometimes they are unofficial (as when local bodies fail to comply with central directives) and are liable to attack when discovered. Sometimes, again, the central authorities may know that regulations are not being observed, but are unable to do much about it because of lack of facilities, shortage of personnel, or because fulfilment of the educational plans might throw the economy of the area out of gear. (For example, the services of youths who should, strictly speaking, still be at school may be urgently needed to get the harvest in.) Finally, some details of curriculum and school organization are sometimes left to the discretion of the local authorities. But voluntary relinquishing of authority is rare.

For all the local differences in the Soviet system, the general picture by British or American standards is one of substantial uniformity throughout the country, with the central authority, acting through the various levels of the Communist Party, seeking to keep its finger on everything that happens from the office of a ministry of education to the classroom of an elementary teacher. For this reason it is possible to generalize about Soviet education more easily and accurately than about any other country of anything approaching the size and complexity of the U.S.S.R.

Science and Technology

'No society,' says George Counts, the American educationist, 'has ever committed itself so unreservedly in words to the mastery and development of mathematics and the natural sciences.' Certainly one of the things that strike the British observer about Soviet education is the continual stress on science and the scientific method. Whereas there is still a tendency in our schools to talk about 'science' as if it were a single subject like history, literature, or languages, and treat it as of

interest mainly to the potential specialist, the Soviet schools give a prominent place to the various branches of science and technology, not just with an eye to the needs of the army of specialists being assiduously trained at the present time, but also as a fundamental part of the general education of all pupils, whether they intend to specialize in that side or not.

In higher education, there is a much greater bias towards the scientific and technological side than there is in this country, and particularly towards the applied sciences such as engineering, agronomy, industrial chemistry. While the absolute number of students is rising all the time, the proportion of scientific specialists is rising even faster. This stress may seem even heavier than it is, since the Russian word *nauka*, like the German *Wissenschaft*, has a wider meaning than the English word 'science', being often applied to many studies that we prefer to classify among the 'humanities'—philological science, economic science, pedagogic science, and so forth. Nevertheless, the difference in emphasis remains. Facilities for scientific study at higher level are expanding faster than those for the 'arts' side, yet the run on them is increasing even faster. Competition for entry to arts faculties is keen; for most science faculties it is positively fierce.

The emphasis on science as part of general education is evident early in the basic eight-year school. Scientific subjects are introduced gradually, until by the eighth year they take up nearly half the week's teaching time. (In a thirty-six-hour week, there are five hours of mathematics, three of physics, two of chemistry, two of biology, two of geography, one of technical drawing—a total of fifteen hours. Various forms of work-training account for five hours, and the humanities and physical education for the rest of the time.) Over the whole of the eight-year course, scientific subjects account for thirty-five per cent of the time, work-training for about fifteen per cent, and upwards of forty-three per cent for the humanities. The proportion of science increases as the course proceeds.

The reasons for this are partly practical. Like any other major industrial country, the Soviet Union has a large and growing need for highly-trained scientists, theoretical and applied, of all kinds. The experience of the early years, when acute shortages of educated manpower and the urgency of the problems to be tackled made necessary conscious efforts to tap every possible

source, including the use of 'crash' programmes, has had a lasting effect; this is one explanation of the Soviet authorities' acute awareness of the importance to the developing national economy of adequate facilities for the training of scientists. Past experience, too, of having to make do with seriously undertrained people must have pressed home the lesson that even the most generous provision for scientific higher education is seriously handicapped unless it is strongly based on the ordinary schools.

There is also an ideological basis for this. In the Marxist-Leninist view, stress on scientific education for the sake of the betterment of the economy is a praiseworthy aim, but limited. One of the main functions of the Soviet school, as we have seen, is to 'mould the materialist world outlook of the pupils'. Instilling Marxist views into the young involves, among other things, playing up the scientific attitude as the only way to the truth, and using it as a discouragement of any tendencies towards mystical or religious thinking. Marxist teaching is fundamentally 'rationalist' in its approach; it is only to be expected, therefore, that a Marxist state will emphasize the importance of the natural sciences in the upbringing of its young people.

Polytechnical Education

Linked with the scientific bias of Soviet education is the present policy of 'polytechnical education', one of the central points in the reforms of 1958 and after. Polytechnical education (*Politekhnicheskoe obrazovanie*) is defined by the Soviet authorities as an education based on the fundamentals of industrial production; it is quite distinct from trade training, which deals with a particular vocational skill. Its aim is to make children familiar with the most important branches of production in industry and agriculture, imparting skills in the handling of tools and material, and generally acquainting them with both theoretical knowledge and first-hand practical experience of the basic processes of production. Government policy requires that this combination of work theory and practice be combined with the more familiar school subjects to form the basic general education of the future Soviet citizen. Study and work alike must be familiar to him, whatever his future job may be. This, it is felt, makes for the fuller development of the child, since it broadens his horizons, improves his moral development (by getting him

used to working with others—and for others), and makes for cohesion in Soviet society by ensuring a common experience for all sections of the people; the manual and the mental worker will feel less of a gulf between them when both have been taught how the other's job fits the needs of the community, and have had to learn something of the tasks and skills involved. This policy is also intended to benefit the national economy. The U.S.S.R. is still suffering from an acute manpower shortage as a result of the losses of the Second World War; the advantages of getting the schools to produce a better-trained labour-force, which could make some useful work-contribution while still learning, may well have weighed more heavily with the authorities than the purely ideological considerations.

It will be necessary to examine more fully the implications of the polytechnical principle when we come to look at the present structure of the school system and the recent reforms that have made such sweeping changes in Soviet education. For the moment, it is worth remembering that there is nothing new about it; its recent reintroduction was made to serve a present need, but it has been in the air since the revolution and before. Karl Marx advocated the combination of academic study and productive labour (*Capital*, Book I, and elsewhere). Lenin, Krupskaya, and many others strongly supported the idea, but attempts to carry it into effect in the nineteen-twenties ended in complete failure, as did the use of 'progressive' educational methods, when excess of enthusiasm and doctrinaire application of the principle resulted in such a low standard of general education that the reaction of the 1930s went to extremes in the other direction, and the Soviet school settled into a long period of highly verbal, academic, formal instruction, from which it has only recently and partially emerged. Polytechnical education made a comeback in the decisions of the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party in 1952, but according to Khrushchov, speaking at the Twentieth Congress in 1956, the result was a great deal of talk and very little action. As this was the Congress where the famous 'secret speech' began the systematic demolition of Stalin as father-figure, the delegates doubtless took less notice of educational issues than they might have done in less disturbing circumstances. Nonetheless, the polytechnical principle was extended, though the academic bias remained. In 1958, following Khrushchov's further advocacy of it, a greater degree of

polytechnical education became one of the main features of the reforms that affected the school system in the following years. It is still, perhaps, too early to say how radical or effective this change has been; the process is not yet complete, and there still seems to be some controversy on the subject. In 1964, after complaints had been mounting for some time about the repetitive nature of much of the pupils' labour training and production practice, the proportion of time devoted to these activities was reduced, especially in the senior forms.[3] But it is still claimed[4] that the polytechnical principle is a central feature of the Soviet school; whether it will remain so is yet to be seen.

Co-education

It has always been claimed that there is complete equality of the sexes in the Soviet Union, in education as in other fields. 'Women in the U.S.S.R.,' declares Article 122 of the Constitution, 'are accorded all rights on an equal footing with men in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political, and other social activity.' This, in contrast with the position before the revolution, was something of a novelty in the early days, especially in the areas of the Caucasus and Central Asia where Muslim tradition was strong. As far as can be judged from the ratio of the sexes in higher education (roughly equal numbers of men and women on average), this claim seems substantially justified.

But, as other countries have found, it is one thing to declare in favour of equality of opportunity in education for both sexes, and another to decide the best way of achieving it. It is universally recognized that boys and girls develop at different rates, have different emotional needs, and even in the U.S.S.R., where practically all women work whether they are married or not, have different educational needs where their future roles in the home are concerned. It is possible to argue that equality in education means the *same* education for both, and that differentiation always leads to some inequality. On the other hand, it can be urged that because of their differences equal treatment must involve *separate* education that will take account of the particular needs of both sexes. The final decision usually depends on whether differences or similarities are thought to be more important.

Soviet policy has switched twice on this issue. Until 1943, co-education was the rule throughout the U.S.S.R. In the atmosphere of female emancipation after the revolution, segregation would have been regarded as reactionary and therefore unthinkable. In 1943 the situation was reviewed. Supported by discussion in the Press, a Decree was issued separating the sexes in the schools. In point of fact, the decision was never fully implemented. In the cities and bigger towns it was put into effect, but in the country it was difficult, in the remote areas impossible. In regions where many of the pupils lived far from the nearest school it was difficult enough as things stood to keep the schools running effectively without adding the further complication of separate but parallel schools for boys and girls. Except in the main population centres, therefore, co-education went on as before.

In 1954, public pulse-taking began again with the usual round of letters to the papers, meetings, and the like. Much of it may have been little more than window-dressing to justify decisions already taken—this was certainly the case on earlier occasions. Canvassing of senior officials behind the scenes probably still carried more weight than the public controversies. But, however the decision was reached, the result this time was the reintroduction of co-education throughout the school system, and those schools which had been segregated were speedily reorganized. This is the position at present. Apart from attending separate classes for physical education in the older forms, and some division of the sexes arising from the teaching of domestic science, boys and girls work together for everything—in the classrooms, workrooms, laboratories, and in the extra-curricular bodies such as the youth organization. Even the boarding schools are mixed, as a matter of policy as well as convenience. Co-education may still be a live issue in some other countries, but in the U.S.S.R. it appears to have come to stay.

Comprehensive Schooling

Soviet schools, except for a number of specialist schools which will be dealt with later, are completely comprehensive. Officially, every school of general education caters for the entire age-group, regardless of intelligence or attainment, of the area

which it serves. Within each school, the comprehensive principle is carried to extremes; any kind of 'streaming' of the children into more and less able groups is forbidden. In this, the Soviet school goes farther than comprehensive schools in most other countries. The device of 'setting', extensively used in English comprehensive schools, whereby a child may be in a top section for, say, English and French but in a lower one for mathematics, is likewise excluded. Not only does the Soviet system reject the segregation of pupils into grammar-school-type and secondary-modern-type courses, but rejects any kind of segregation within the school. Every class is thus expected to have a complete cross-section of ability, from the brilliant to the plodder, all doing the same courses at the same pace. In the larger schools several classes are found in each year or grade, but are not divided by ability—children are allocated to 3a, 3b, 3c, or whatever nomenclature is used, according to the streets they live in, the order their names come in the alphabet, or by some other non-scholastic standard.

This is a startling situation to the Western observer, accustomed to selective schools and different courses designed for different levels of ability. In the U.S.S.R., *all* children are given the extensive course in the sciences mentioned before, all learn one foreign language, all go through the same course in history, geography, Russian, and so on. The inevitable difficulties arising from this are got round to some extent by encouraging the abler pupils to help those who are slower with their work—the 'arm round the book' mentality has no place here—and by putting so much emphasis on the virtues of hard work that some of the initially duller pupils can make up by sheer slog some of what they lack in native wit.

Among the results of this system are, on the credit side, some interesting performances in schools. It would be too much to expect that the entire age-group, or anything like it, could all reach the same fairly high official standard, but it does seem that that there is some advantage in refusing to draw a firm line between the academically able minority and the rest, as happens in most Western European systems; more children make the grade than would be thought possible by those conditioned to the values of a selective system.

On the other hand, children who do not satisfactorily learn the work of their year have to repeat. Bearing in mind the highly

academic content of the curriculum, it is hardly surprising that the system leads to a good deal of repeating. The proportion seems to vary from place to place, depending on the standard of teaching and school facilities. According to the Assistant Director of Education in Leningrad, 16,000 out of a total of 450,000 schoolchildren in the city were repeating the year's work during the school year 1962–3. Leningrad is better off for teachers and school buildings than most other parts of the Soviet Union, however; the national proportion of repeats is a good deal higher than this. Before the reforms of 1958, Khrushchov remarked that of all children in seven-year schools in the U.S.S.R., twenty per cent repeated so often that they never finished the course. Even allowing for improvement since, this seems a likely enough figure. It seems likely, too, that standards do vary from school to school, and that if they were more strictly applied there would be rather more children repeating. Complaints have appeared in the Soviet Press about the tendency of some teachers to assess their pupils too leniently—an easy thing to do when so much use is made of oral examinations. Nevertheless, the schools do seem to bring a surprisingly high proportion of the population to a standard that we tend to think of as within the reach of the most able thirty per cent at best.

Apart from repeating, there are other ways in which the policy of the same course at the same pace for all can be modified. Children who are obviously mentally backward, such as mongols, cretins, and the mentally defective generally, are educated along different lines in special schools run by the Ministry of Public Health, which is also responsible for the schools for the physically handicapped—those for cripples, epileptics, the deaf and the blind, the partially hearing and partially sighted, children with severe speech defects, and the like. Schools of this type take care of the extreme cases who are unable to cope with the pace of the ordinary school. The concept of inherited intelligence is regarded with distrust by Soviet educators: whenever possible, backwardness is attributed to specific congenital defects rather than to simple lack of intelligence.

There are also unofficial ways of getting round the 'no streaming' problem. In spite of official insistence on uniformity of curricula and standards in schools of the same type, it often turns out that some schools are better than others, mainly due

to the influence of the director and staff. Some schools with a lower standard tend to become dumping-grounds for children that other schools in the area can do nothing with; a good deal of passing pupils from school to school can take place, ending, sometimes, with the release of the least responsive children to blind-alley jobs before they reach the statutory leaving age. Such practices are totally unofficial and contrary to government policy, though the authorities must occasionally wink the eye for this to be possible at all. How much of this goes on is almost impossible to discover; the central authorities must be aware of it to some extent, but as we have seen they are often in no position to do much about it, especially in areas where the pressure of economic circumstances proves more powerful than regulations. But in all probability there are plenty of such malpractices that the central authorities themselves do not know about; local officials departing from the regulations are unlikely to advertise the fact if they can help it. The very existence of such practices is denied, of course, but from time to time references appear in the Soviet Press about, say, a gang of juvenile hooligans being brought up in court for some offence or other; it may come out that they were employed as general labourers at the Tallinn docks, and that they were mostly aged fourteen or even under, and therefore, officially, should not have been there at all, but at school. As often as not, such incidental disclosures lead to a row in the Press or in the teachers' journals, and some official is rapped over the knuckles or demoted. It is likely that if it were particularly common there would be more complaints and recriminations about it; however, the fact that such things can happen at all shows that the official position can be departed from in a number of ways even in a highly centralized system.

This rejection of streaming stems, fundamentally, from the Marxist insistence on the importance of environment in shaping a child's personality and abilities, rather than his hereditary equipment. Intelligence tests are condemned as 'bourgeois pseudo-science', while the whole concept of 'intelligence' as innate ability is viewed with deep mistrust. The Marxist believes that human nature is not basically pre-ordained, but rests in the hands of man himself; the Soviet educator accordingly regards the child as much more malleable than do most Western educators. He is likely to attribute failures not to his theories, but to misapplication of them or to practical difficulties like lack

of space, inadequate pre-school training, or some such specific defect. Many Soviet teachers are less sure,[5] having seen the differences in children's ability very clearly at first hand. They are liable to accept (up to a point and with caution) the idea of *some* degree of innate ability, and agree that these differences tend to raise problems in teaching unstreamed classes. But they will often argue that the social benefits of having all types of children working together more than compensate for the drawbacks of handling such mixed groups. The bright child may lose by not being able to forge ahead at his own pace; but the social training he receives in learning to help others instead of concentrating exclusively on his own advancement is felt to be one of the important foundations of communist morality. The emphasis is put on cooperation in the school rather than competition—which, if accepted, must certainly make unstreamed teaching easier than it would be here. But for all the advantages, real or imagined, difficulties persist. It will be seen later that realization of the need to provide some degree of diversity for the older pupils at least was one factor in the reforms of 1958.

1. There is also a parallel system of Russian-language school in many non-Russian areas, see p. 82.

2. French is catching up, German falling behind. It is expected that by 1970–1, fifty per cent will be studying English, twenty per cent German, twenty per cent French, and ten per cent Spanish and other languages.

3. *Konsultatsiya Ministerstva prosveshcheniya RSFSR* (*Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, 15 August 1964).

4. 'Novyi uchebnyi god' (*Sovietskaya Rossiya*, 13 August 1964) and 'Desyatiletnaya, Trudovaya, Politekhnicheskaya' (*Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, 15 August 1964).

5. This is based on conversations with several teachers in Moscow and Leningrad in September 1962.

3 General Characteristics: II

Discipline and Moral Education

In any kind of school, the most immediate aim in maintaining discipline is to make efficient teaching possible. There are some educationists who feel that they can teach in an atmosphere verging on permanent anarchy, but most teachers in most countries, and certainly in the U.S.S.R., are convinced that some degree of regulation is necessary to enable the teacher to get on with his job. But discipline, in the Soviet school and elsewhere, is regarded as more than a means of keeping the children in order while they are in the classroom—its aim is to have a more permanent effect in accustoming the child to certain ways of behaving and, if possible, thinking. In the Soviet scheme, discipline is essentially a means towards self-discipline; as well as making for the smooth running of classroom routine, it is intended to be part and parcel of the wider aim of moral education in shaping the future member of Soviet society.

For this reason, the familiar pattern of surrounding the child with a swarm of 'dont's' is discouraged in the U.S.S.R. This is not to say that the detailed regulation of his conduct is disapproved of—on the contrary. But the stress is more on the positive side; exhortation rather than prohibition is the keynote, and the duties towards which he is exhorted are wide indeed.

Throughout the U.S.S.R., every child is expected to be familiar with, and observe, the twenty standard 'Rules for Pupils'[1] on which his disciplinary training is based. Not only are the children supposed to know *what* they are, but also *why* they are made, so that when a child is guilty of some misdemeanour the teacher may call on him to say which rule he has broken,

and why he should have observed it. If the culprit is unable or unwilling to do this, another pupil will always oblige.

These rules are such a good guide to the comprehensive nature of Soviet discipline, and present such a clear picture of what the school requires of the children, that they are worth quoting in full:

It is the duty of every school child:

1. To acquire knowledge persistently in order to become an educated and cultured citizen and to be of the greatest possible service to his country.
2. To study diligently, to be punctual in attendance, and not arrive late for classes.
3. To obey the instructions of the school director and the teachers without question.
4. To arrive at school with all the necessary textbooks and writing materials; to have everything ready for the lesson before the teacher arrives.
5. To come to school clean, well groomed, and neatly dressed.
6. To keep his place in the classroom neat and tidy.
7. To enter the classroom and take his place immediately after the bell rings; to enter and leave the classroom during the lesson only with the teacher's permission.
8. To sit upright during the lesson, not leaning on the elbows or slouching; to listen attentively to the teacher's explanation and the other pupils' answers, and not to talk or let his attention wander to other things.
9. To rise when the teacher or director enters or leaves the room.
10. To stand to attention when answering the teacher; to sit down only with the teacher's permission; to raise his hand if he wishes to answer or ask a question.
11. To take accurate notes in his assignment book of homework scheduled for the next lesson, and to show these notes to his parents, and to do all the homework unaided.
12. To be respectful to the school directors and teachers; when meeting them, to greet them with a polite bow; boys should also raise their caps.
13. To be polite to his elders, to behave modestly and respectfully in school, in the street, and in public places.
14. Not to use coarse expressions, not to smoke, not to gamble for money or other objects.
15. To protect school property; to be careful of his personal things and the belongings of his comrades.
16. To be attentive and considerate of old people, small children, and the weak and the sick; to give them a seat on the bus or make way for them in the street, being helpful to them in every way.
17. To obey his parents, to help them take care of his small brothers and sisters.
18. To maintain order and cleanliness in rooms; to keep his clothes, shoes, and bed neat and tidy.

19. To carry his student's record book with him always, to guard it carefully, never handing it over to anyone else, and to present it on request of the teacher or school director.
20. To cherish the honour of his school and class and defend it as his own.

These rules go far beyond the needs of discipline in the narrower sense. Some of them, certainly, seem dictated by pure administrative convenience, others are concerned more with formal etiquette than with anything more fundamental; but the total impression is not that of a battery of convenient regulations and nothing more. The object of holding up a code of this kind is to set a standard of behaviour and attitudes. Though many of the precepts have only an indirect connexion with moral issues in the strict sense, they serve to condition the children to conduct themselves in the socially approved manner, which is the cornerstone of communist moral teaching. They also, incidentally, serve to minimize the confusion that might result from the arbitrary variations of discipline that can be found from one class to the next in more loosely organized systems; the picture of society's expectations is constant throughout.

The Soviet school takes moral education very seriously indeed; no less seriously than instruction in, say, the basic skills or the sciences. The reason is not far to seek; we have seen that the overriding purpose of education is to serve the needs of Soviet society by preparing its future citizens according to requirements, and moral education is, in the Marxist view, an aspect of political education. There is little likelihood, therefore, of moral teaching being confined to the occasional pious platitude from the teacher in the course of ordinary lessons. Platitudes there are in plenty, but this is held to be totally insufficient. If Soviet education is to succeed in its basic purpose, children have to be taught what are considered to be the right values, and put in the frame of mind to act accordingly.

The Marxist view of ethics rules out any supernatural or metaphysical basis for moral values. Broadly, it regards a moral code as a device to serve the needs of the society in which it is current, an aid to securing the loyalty and cooperation of citizens, a stimulus to effort for the common good, or as a simple lubricant (in the form of politeness, consideration, etc.), which helps the wheels of society to run more smoothly. Communist morality is

thus socially derived, and consequently has many features peculiar to the needs of Soviet society, such as love for the Soviet motherland, pride in the revolutionary traditions, loyalty to the precepts of Lenin, the Soviet government, and the Communist Party. Many of the other precepts are familiar in most societies, as when children are exhorted to be unselfish, kindly, hard-working, honest, and so forth. Some communist writers on morality argue that the basic virtues are self-evidently and absolutely good. This, of course, does not take the argument very far ('good is good because it is good', as it were), nor does the idea that *all* morality is based on class interest, which is demonstrably untrue. Many Marxists now state that certain basic moral values are valid for all societies, since they operate to the benefit of mankind at large. This does not mean that they feel the need of any divine or metaphysical standard—the basic values are derived from the needs of social man. The main difference is that whereas these virtues are presented in most other countries as absolutes in their own right, or as conduct pleasing to God, they are esteemed and encouraged in the Soviet school for their social utility in smoothing personal relations, and in making the child more ready to work selflessly for the well-being of the community, an essential attribute of the 'new man' whom the Soviet educators are striving to produce.

The aim of moral teaching, then, is to produce a person who will be willing and able to put all the effort of which he is capable into work for the common good, building the new society under the guidance of the Communist Party and, furthermore, finding joy and fulfilment in the task. This is a more ambitious objective than merely getting people to behave themselves, which can sometimes be difficult enough. To have any hope of even partial success, it needs both careful planning and the mustering of all available resources; this, in large measure, is what the Soviet educational system does.

Moral education is a joint enterprise, in which the school, the youth organizations, parents' bodies, and others are all expected to play their parts. As far as the school is concerned, every effort is made to utilize any possible means of putting across the ideas and practice of communist morality, such as class organization, teacher's example, direct preaching, sloganizing, or anything else that can be brought to bear. Moral education is given a prominent place in teachers' training courses; the statement

that 'it is important not just to produce teachers of subjects but teachers of children' comes to the lips of tutors in Pedagogic Institutes no less frequently than their Western counterparts, and is backed up with special textbooks and schemes of instruction on the subject. Problems of moral education are considered legitimate fields for study and research on a par with more conventional topics; the schemes of work in this field are just as detailed and carefully thought out. The Academy of Pedagogic Sciences recently worked out a graded scheme for moral education,[2] detailing the various character traits and behaviour patterns thought appropriate to children of different age levels, a scheme which forms the framework for much of the direct moral teaching in the schools.

Space does not permit a full account of this scheme, but some examples will suffice to show the scope of the objectives the teacher is expected to try to attain. At the elementary level, roughly from the age of seven to eleven, the school is to inculcate a wide range of character traits calculated to lay the foundations of 'communist character' in the children. Though there is no suggestion that they can be tackled in logical sequence, they are grouped for convenience into eight principal categories:

1. Elementary ideas of good and bad
2. Love of the Motherland
3. Industriousness and frugality
4. Truthfulness, honesty, modesty, and kindness
5. Friendship and comradeship
6. Discipline
7. Love of studies and conscientiousness
8. Good social conduct in the school, at home, in the streets, and in public places

These categories are wide and comprehensive. For example, the second—Love of the Motherland—embraces the following: to respect the work of adults for the common good and the welfare of the family, and to bring adults joy through success in study and conduct; to love one's school, to develop the ability to study well, to respect the teacher; to love the native locality; to take an interest in the heroic past and present of the Motherland, to have a warm love for V. I. Lenin, to have a feeling of gratitude to the Communist Party and the Soviet government; to have a feeling of friendship for the children of all nations; to

hate instigators of wars; to have the desire to be good Octobrists or Pioneers. The fact that all these traits are grouped under 'Love of the Motherland' shows how far basic Soviet morality is rooted in the needs of society as a whole, in the minds of the educators at least.

Again, 'Love of studies and conscientiousness', the seventh category, includes: to be curious, listen attentively, read, observe, work, study, and create; to carry out all requirements and teacher's instructions with a degree of independence; to apply the acquired knowledge to life and share it with others. The eighth category, 'Good social conduct in the school, at home, in the streets and in public places', is even more detailed and all-embracing; the details of this are: to be orderly, neat, and well-groomed; to be polite, using the common forms of politeness such as 'Good morning', 'Please', 'Thank you', and so forth, and to look affable during conversation and not interrupt each other; to behave properly at home, leaving and entering the house quietly and without banging doors, and asking permission to take anything or leave the house; to conduct oneself properly in the streets and in public places, obeying the rules of conduct in cinemas, dining-rooms, libraries, etc., to be on time, to wipe footwear at the entrance, not to run about, not to break in line, not to speak loudly; to prevent comrades from committing bad actions. Most of the categories of behaviour are thus analysed to indicate general principles and the details of everyday conduct. Such schemes go beyond the 'Rules for Pupils', which are a prop for wider moral teaching, as outlined above.

Methods are as precise and detailed as the aims. The teacher has a long list of activities in the school that can be used to put across the desired points. These are grouped under the following general headings: (1) Preparation for the school year, (2) First days in class, (3) Cooperation with the Pioneers, (4) Cooperation within the home, (5) Personal example of the teacher, (6) Common welfare, (7) Celebration of certain days, (8) Themes, story-telling, reading, dramas, (9) Preparation for the summer. In general, the teacher is expected to make deliberate use of practically any school experience or activity, in the classroom or out of it, to influence in the prescribed direction the child's behaviour and development of moral values. He is also expected to get through the scheme by the end of the fourth year, when

the child is about eleven; by that time the elementary foundations of morality should have been established, so that the child can proceed to the next, and more elaborate, stage.

At this second stage, the child is now under the influence, not of one all-purpose class teacher, but of several subject specialists and a 'form teacher' whose job it is to ensure team coordination and have a special eye to the welfare and moral education of the particular class. At this level, the moral traits to be encouraged are in some cases the same as the earlier ones, with a change in emphasis from habit-forming to rational appreciation of the need for them, and their place in the whole structure of Soviet society. Here are a few of the items involved: (1) Soviet patriotism and a feeling of friendship among peoples. This includes, among other things, love of one's own locale, respect for historic revolutionary and other monuments, understanding of the superiority of the Soviet over the bourgeois system, working for the good of the native land, taking a lively interest in the activities of the Communist Party, the Soviet government, and the youth movement, taking an active part in the work of the Pioneers, taking an interest in the life and culture of peoples of other lands, and loving the children of workers the world over. (2) Realization of social duty. (3) Discipline, persistence, and endurance, including 'distinguishing between caution and cowardice, between boldness and recklessness'. (4) Friendship and comradeship, one instance of which is 'telling a comrade tactfully the truth to his face and helping him to find the right solution'. (5) Attentive and thoughtful attitudes towards people. (6) Truthfulness, honesty, and modesty; apart from the avoidance of lying, this is taken to comprise having a 'proper attitude' to criticism, being able to resist bad influences such as 'rowdyism, profanity, gambling, drinking, idleness, excessive fondness of motion pictures and football', avoidance of boasting about the position of one's parents, or of attracting attention by 'loud clothing or accentuated manners'. (7) Responsible attitudes towards study and work; apart from the expected exhortations to diligence, we find included here the application of knowledge and skills to life for the common welfare, and the showing of concern for the study achievements of the whole class.

The methods used for putting over such virtues to the children are much the same as in the earlier classes, but with more

conscious participation on the part of the pupils, who join in the discussions about the programme of activities for teaching the scheme. This serves not only to make the teaching more immediate, but makes the commitment of the older ones to the values expressed more definite, since activity is always more effective than mere preaching. Most of the work on the staff side inevitably falls on the 'form teacher', but subject specialists are expected to relate their own work to the programme as well, while the parents and the Pioneers, by giving support to the teacher and reinforcing what is taught in the classroom, help to complete the process. Habits of performing 'socially useful labour'—voluntary work for the community, organized by the school and the Pioneer organization—are thought to be especially valuable, since this accustoms the children to work for others, and shows them how their efforts can do good in some specific, tangible way that they can understand. There are many activities of this kind, including such work as collecting scrap metal for factories, weeding communal gardens, helping crippled war veterans with their housework, even more elaborate tasks such as helping to lay out a playground for pre-school children in the neighbourhood, or building radio sets for invalids. Some of these tasks are officially organized, but many *appear* to arise spontaneously from the children themselves, which is considered particularly praiseworthy, and is reported frequently and prominently in *Pionerskaya Pravda* and other children's periodicals. The frequency with which this happens seems to show that the aims of the school in moral education have a considerable degree of success. Words are always cheap, but action suggests a much more real conviction—if the description is to be trusted.

In the senior classes the emphasis in moral training is more towards personal and social responsibility, and is aimed more specifically at the fitting of young people for their duties as adults, members of families, workers, and citizens of the U.S.S.R. Many of the moral precepts dealt with in the earlier years still feature in the scheme, but the stress is now more on political attitudes, correct understanding of social theory, and personal responsibility to the 'collective' or group, whether national, local, or personal. Loyalty to the precepts of Marx and Lenin, to the policy of the Communist Party, the Komsomol, the Soviet government and people, and the Motherland figure

prominently, as might be expected. Stressed also are the obligations to action of all kinds—in work, study, 'agitation' (explaining and defending Party policies), in studying to raise one's 'theoretical and ideological level', and in combating local nationalism and racialism as well as 'loafers, slackers, thieves, and those who would damage public property'. In the field of personal values and conduct, pupils must be taught to be modest in relation to other people, to maintain friendly relations between the sexes (presumably this means that youths must treat girls as equals, not just as potential sexual partners), to be intolerant of all forms of humiliation and insults to other people, to be intolerant of 'abnormal and amoral acts, and all indications of disrespect, boasting, haughtiness, and other violations of the norms of socialist humanism', not to violate Soviet laws and to keep others from violating them, to aid those in need, to be intolerant of 'uncomradely attitudes' towards women, and so forth. These are only a few of the character traits that the authorities see as essential ingredients of what they call 'moral Soviet man'.

As before, the methods used to inculcate the desired attitudes and conduct range over all fields of school and extra-curricular work. Debates, discussions, lectures, and the like are brought in to ensure understanding of the moral code, while 'socially useful labour', political work in the youth organization, and routine school studies, are intended to reinforce these desirable attitudes by turning them into habitual actions.

The attention paid to moral education in the Soviet school, then, is considerable, and appears to be effective on the whole, though of course it does not produce the generation of selfless paragons visualized by schemes such as the one outlined above. This effectiveness is due to some extent to the general atmosphere in Soviet society, conducive to conformity and collective action at all levels. But this is not enough; it might cow pupils into dull acquiescence, but little more. There are some young people who kick over the traces and go in for some kind of delinquency, possibly as a protest, but for the most part the impression of urban Soviet schoolchildren is one of earnest, even naïve, concern for their own prowess and their duty to the 'collective', which seems based on sincerity rather than any need to go through the motions. Social conformity doubtless has much to do with it; so has the continual barrage of politico-

moral sloganizing to which the child has been subjected, in school and out, from his earliest years. But it would be a mistake to exaggerate the importance of this aspect; the success of moral teaching in the schools is mainly due to the care with which it is planned and presented, to the determination, so typical of Soviet education, to leave nothing to chance. Significantly, every aspiring teacher, specialist or not, must take a course in the theory of moral education as part of his basic curriculum.

With such ambitious aims in moral education and discipline, more immediate problems might seem relatively unimportant. This is true in a sense; order is the means to the end, not the end itself. But it is recognized that it is no less important for all that—as we have seen, it is one of the main props for the wider aims, as well as an obvious necessity if any work is to be done. A great deal of attention is therefore paid to problems of dealing with the lazy, stubborn, or rebellious child.

Soviet teachers are discouraged from relying too much on fear of punishment. They are urged rather to use positive methods, such as pointing out the ill effects of the child's wrongdoing. Nevertheless, they do have at their disposal a carefully graded system of punishments for use when necessary. Corporal punishment is not one of these; violence to children is condemned by theory, disapproved of by public opinion, and forbidden by law. (In this, the Soviet Union is of the same mind as most other countries, with the exception of Britain and one or two others.) But there are other measures available, ranging from a reproof from the teacher to expulsion from the school. Reproofs and reprimands are of varying degrees of severity; they may come from the class teacher or the director of the school, they may be private or public, they may be mild in tone and content or heavy with menace for the future if better behaviour is not forthcoming. Like all punishments, they are supposed to be noted in the pupil's record, which details his school work and conduct from the day he enters the school to the end of his course. In the vast majority of cases, a moderate reprimand seems to be enough. If not, the teacher may keep the child in after school for extra work; he may have the child suspended from the Pioneer organization, which is felt to be a great disgrace, as the child thus deprived of the right to wear his red scarf feels conspicuous as long as his suspension lasts—usually about a term. The teacher may even take the step of lowering the pupil's conduct

mark, a very serious matter indeed. All school subjects are marked on a five-point scale, from one (very bad) to five (excellent). A complete record of these marks is kept to show the child's day-to-day progress. In ordinary subjects a four or even a three is quite passable, but for *conduct* nothing less than a five will do. If the conduct mark is reduced to four, the pupil is in effect under threat of expulsion, for if there is no sign of improvement within a short time it can then be reduced to three, the signal for his ejection from the school. Since the pupils (and their parents) know this from the start of their school careers, things seldom go as far as this.

It is seldom, in fact, that the teacher has to use more than a small part of his battery of punishments, for the children frequently take a hand themselves. If one of their number is behaving badly, or is lazy at his work, they tend to take this as letting them and the school down, having been conditioned from their earliest days to the idea of the social duty of work and collective responsibility. Before official action has gone beyond a reprimand or two, therefore, the defaulter is likely to find himself at a meeting of his classmates in the school Pioneer room, where they solemnly discuss his shortcomings, point out the error of his ways, appeal to him to remember his duty to the class, the school, the Motherland, the building of communism. If the trouble stems from his inability to cope with the classwork, they will offer to coach him during free time. If the child is still obdurate, or refuses to attend the meetings at all, they will discuss his case carefully and deliberate what to do. They may decide to 'send him to Coventry', or make fun of him in the class wall-newspaper, if they feel that cold-shouldering or ridicule are likely to have any effect. Usually, they do—few children like to find suddenly that nobody will speak to them, or can shrug off caricatures of themselves as free-wheeling passengers on a multiple bicycle which everyone else is furiously pedalling uphill 'on to the building of communism', or seeing themselves pilloried as 'traitors to the future of the Soviet Union' if their classmates are taking an unusually stern line. It can be seen why teachers rarely have to unleash their full powers on badly behaved children, for only the hardened or the completely indifferent are likely to withstand such pressures from their classmates. Even with real 'problem-children' group pressure can do much; in such cases the cruder methods of

ostracism and satire are less likely to be used, as they will do more harm than good, but the children will try to win the difficult ones over by drawing them into their games and activities if they can. In short, class opinion is on the teacher's side and is quick to organize for action, a situation which makes the teacher's job of keeping order infinitely easier than where it is taken for granted (as in some schools here) that it must always be a battle between teacher and class.

There are other means of securing class order as well as those mentioned. As we shall see presently, steps are taken to ensure that the school has the support of the parents, which helps enormously. Besides this, and the continual pressure on the child to work hard and behave well as a moral and social duty, self-interest plays its part too. For the vast majority of children (more than ever if the current onslaught on nepotism and string-pulling proves effective) the only way to personal advancement is through education. For any youngster at all ambitious, a good school record is absolutely essential. Most children realize this, and behave accordingly. There are a few who are stubborn, maladjusted, or lazy, to an extent that defies all treatment; there are a few who resent the continual pressures and are strongminded enough to show it and put up with the consequences. These are the casualties of an educational system that makes heavy demands of its pupils, some of whom develop into the Soviet equivalents of the Teddy-boys and the thugs, the *stilyagi* and *guligany*. But the great majority do behave and do work hard; in this way they can conveniently yield to overwhelming social pressure, reap personal advantage, and perform their moral and patriotic duty at one and the same time.

Family and School

Even the most far-reaching school systems have the children in their charge only part of the time. During a child's school career, therefore, the school is only one of the influences on his character and development, however carefully planned its work may be. Further, compulsory schooling in the U.S.S.R. does not begin until the child has reached the age of seven, by which time his personality and inclinations have already been shaped to a considerable degree. The effectiveness of what the school teaches, therefore, depends largely on its ability to ensure

cooperation outside. Of these other influences, the most important is the family; this is the first group with which the child comes in contact, and it provides the environment in which most of his time is spent during his formative years. Appreciating this, Soviet educators take great care to make sure that the family is on their side. Passive approval, as in other things, is not enough; the school uses every available means to enlist the parents as active supporters of its work, and to make them conscious of the family's role as 'the primary cell of socialist society'.

There are many ways of doing this, the most effective being the association of parents with the active running of the school. Every class has its parents' meeting. This is convened by the director of the school at the beginning of the session, and meets in the appropriate form-room with the teacher as chairman. Some of the time may be spent looking at exhibitions of classwork, listening to the teacher lecturing on some aspect of the children's education, or congratulating each other (as is the custom) on the beginning of the new school year. The parents of the class will meet as a group once or twice every term to discuss general problems or to hammer out particular difficulties; the principal purpose of these meetings is to acquaint the parents with the work of the school in general and their own children in particular. At the first of these meetings, the parents elect three of their number (sometimes called the 'Parents' Trinity') to serve on the Parents' Committee of the whole school.

The school Parents' Committee is a more elaborate and formal organization, operating according to instructions from the ministry of education on composition, activities, and procedure. It elects a praesidium of eight members or more, including one from each year; this praesidium in turn elects a chairman, who is coopted to the Pedagogic Council, which consists of the entire teaching staff of the school under the chairmanship of the director. The praesidium meets at frequent intervals (usually about once a fortnight) to deal with a variety of problems such as arranging help for parents who are having difficulty with their children, ensuring that the 'Rules for Pupils' are known and understood by all parents, and dealing with difficult cases by interviewing troublesome children, or their parents, or both. The Parents' Committee, through its praesidium, is also involved in discussion on the parents' role in the scheme for moral

education; as with other school work, it sees that the aims are known to the parents and supplies advice (in consultation with the teachers) on practical ways in which they can help. The Committee also cooperates in the running of extra-curricular activities in the school, helping to supply leaders, instructors, material, equipment, and so forth. Generally, the function of the praesidium is to provide a permanent link between the whole body of the parents and the teachers. It ensures that both sides are aware of each other's problems, and is thus a means whereby parents can make their views (or worries) known to the staff. For the most part, however, it is concerned with seeing that parents are aware of their educational duties, and providing the knowledge and help necessary for carrying them out.

The Parents' Committee also organizes full-scale parents' meetings, and runs permanent sub-committees to deal with specific problems. The full parents' meetings take place about once a term, and are devoted partly to lectures by teachers to the whole group, and partly to meetings in the separate classrooms, where the teachers give reports on the work of the class and the progress (or lack of it) of each pupil. The discussion that arises from this is often quite lively, and may go into some detail.

Among the permanent sub-committees found in any school are those on 'Training and Upbringing', which concerns itself with scholastic progress and discipline; 'Pedagogical Propaganda', which organizes meetings, lectures, and generally deals with the spread of educational knowledge among parents; 'Cultural mass work', which helps to run the extra-curricular activities such as 'circles', concerts, theatre visits, and excursions of all kinds; 'Sanitation', for the supervision of the school's dining-rooms, lavatories and washing facilities, and the like. The setting up of these sub-committees is required by Ministry regulation, though others may be appointed if necessary, at the discretion of individual Parents' Committees. There is no formal parents' organization above the level of the school.

Home and school contacts are not confined to committee work and formal meetings. The school director may call parents to the school for consultation, either singly or in groups; 'Parents' Trinities' can sit in on lessons to see them in action for themselves. As for the teacher, home visiting is regarded as part of his normal duties. This starts in the earliest classes and

continues right up to the end of the school course. The object is partly to enable the teacher to get some idea of the child's home conditions, which can be useful in many ways—it might make all the difference to the tactics used in the case of disciplinary trouble, for example. Further, it gives the parent a chance to talk to the teacher in more familiar, and therefore more reassuring, surroundings, for some parents still find the school rather a daunting place.

Apart from such links between individual schools and parents, steps are taken to reach parents on a national scale. There are radio programmes dealing with a variety of educational topics, designed specially for parents. Many books and pamphlets are also issued, mostly couched in a simple, semi-fictional form, and the magazine *Semya i Shkola* (Family and School), issued once a month, acts as a vehicle for information and, in the correspondence columns, a platform where parents can seek instruction or voice complaints. It is popular in tone and much brighter in style (though this is not saying a great deal) than most Soviet publications. Its circulation, which stood at about fifty thousand just after the war, has climbed near the half-million mark in recent years.

It would be too much to expect this picture of close concord between the family and the school to be universally unblemished. Among difficulties met are the extremes (tryingly familiar to most British teachers) of the uncooperative parent on the one hand and the over-anxious parent on the other. The first is not, apparently, very common, but there are some parents who dismiss the whole system as unwarranted interference or, more usually, just drag their feet and do nothing. But the system is now so well established that they have the rest of the parents against them; if this pressure is insufficient, it is possible for the parents' trade union or factory committee to take an interest, which is harder to resist than the disapproval of neighbours. A recent case in Kiev can serve as an example; in the Krasny factory, a notice was pinned up (by another parent) to the effect that Anatoly Orlenko, Class IV pupil, was behaving badly at school. Orlenko senior speedily found himself before the factory committee, and was told that he ought to do something about this, since it reflected on the factory as well as the child, the parent, and the school. They pointed out that if Orlenko was unable to do anything because he lacked the knowledge, his best

course would be to consult the appropriate organ of the Parents' Committee, or the teacher, who would certainly be able to help him with advice. It is not recorded what the father said, but most probably he was squirming with embarrassment by this time and was only too glad to comply, in case the committee brought the matter up at an open meeting and shamed him publicly before all his workmates. Techniques of this kind are effective, but rarely used; they are regarded as a drastic step to be used only when gentler methods have failed. Given the prevailing atmosphere among parents in the first place, it is hardly surprising that such bull-dozing methods are exceptional.

Parents' concern for their children's future is at least one reason for the cooperation they give to the school, but it is from an excess of such concern that other difficulties arise. Some parents, it seems, regard the school as a device for ensuring their *own* offsprings' smooth passage into higher education and a 'white-collar' job, whatever may happen to anyone else. This can lead to the teacher's being badgered by the progress-hungry parent, who blames the teacher if the desired results are not forthcoming. (A similar situation is not unfamiliar here, as many teachers know to their cost.) Other parents, of the same turn of mind, look askance at work-training and 'socially useful labour', feeling that any form of manual work (*chornaya rabota*, 'black work', as they call it) is beneath their children's dignity. Worse still, if the parent happens to have any influence, particularly political influence, he may bring sometimes intolerable pressure to bear on the teacher to force his child's progress, or even to invent it. Such parents, when they have influence, can be a menace; even when they have not, they can be a thorough nuisance, and make cooperation between family and school difficult in the extreme—as it must always be when the two sides have different interests.

Pushing parents are probably commoner than stubborn ones, but both appear to be in a minority, and all the social pressures at the present time are likely to make these minorities still smaller. Most things are everyone's business in the Soviet Union, which makes the weight of opinion keenly felt by the deviant. The standing of the teacher helps too; the traditional Russian veneration for 'culture' and the Soviet régime's continual emphasis on the social importance of education combine to give the teacher some degree of social prestige. This makes the

average Soviet parent ready to defer to his judgement, and offer help when asked for it. Thus, every point of contact between home and school is in theory maintained, parents are brought into the running of the school whenever feasible, relations between parents and teachers are cordial and respectful, and there can be little doubt that this makes the running of the school much easier and more effective. In this sense it is a partnership, both sides making their contribution to the child's upbringing. But the teachers are regarded as the senior partners, the experts. The school is firmly in control.

The Youth Movement

The work of the Soviet school is so closely linked with the youth organizations that they can be fairly described as an integral part of the educational system. From one point of view they are political organizations, and are thus part of the system in so far as its aims are the inculcation of communist doctrine; some of their functions are recreational, embracing the role played in Western countries by such bodies as the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Boys' Brigade, church clubs, and youth clubs. But they also play a prominent part in the normal work of the school, in matters like helping with discipline, moral education, the tutoring of backward pupils, the provision of spare-time voluntary classes, and so forth. Significantly, the large amounts of money paid to the youth organizations by the state are reckoned in the budget under normal educational expenditure. The youth movement is voluntary, includes both boys and girls, and is organized in three stages: the Octobrists, for the younger children; the Pioneers, for children between the ages of ten and fifteen; and the Komsomol, for young people between fifteen and twenty-seven.

The Octobrists

Unlike the two senior branches, this is not a formal organization, but a rather vague preparatory stage for entry into the Pioneers. Any young pupil who behaves and does his work reasonably well can become a member, but there is no pressure to join, nor is the threat of expulsion used as a means of obtaining discipline—that comes later. Teachers often use informal Octobrist groups to organize children for any task requiring cooperation,

such as tidying the classroom. As they approach the age of ten, however, their teacher, together with Pioneers from higher classes, teaches them about the Pioneer organization and its importance, the duties and privileges of membership, and acquaints them in advance with the Promise and Rules that they will be expected to know, much in the manner of a Cub-mistress preparing her charges for the 'going-up' ceremony into the Scouts.

The Pioneers

'I, a Young Pioneer of the Soviet Union, in the presence of my comrades solemnly promise to love my Soviet Motherland passionately, and to live, learn, and struggle as the great Lenin bade us and as the Communist Party teaches us.' Reciting this promise along with his fellows, the ten-year-old is admitted to the Pioneer Organization and receives from the Pioneer leader his triangular red scarf and the badge bearing the motto '*Vsegda gotov*', 'Always ready'. Speeches made by the leader, and the ritual of the occasion impress on the child's mind the importance and responsibility of membership. At ceremonies of this kind, held in schools, in Pioneer Palaces, or in factories over the whole of the U.S.S.R., the great majority of schoolchildren formally enter the organization which will have more direct impact on their lives than any other while they are at school.

Although membership of the Pioneers is voluntary—in theory, a privilege—most children do in fact join as soon as they are eligible. A few individualists stay out, but they are rare; non-members are much more likely to have been suspended or even expelled from the organization for bad behaviour of some kind. This near-unanimity seems to be due mainly to the natural gregariousness of children—they all want to 'belong'—and to the fact that membership is treated as an honour from the time the child enters the school. A further incentive is the range of interests and activities that membership offers the child.

Strictly speaking, it is not necessary to join the movement to take part in the recreational activities it organizes. It is not an exclusive body like the Communist Party, but is described officially as a 'mass organization'[3] for children. Accordingly, non-members are not only allowed but encouraged to take part in its activities, in the expectation (nearly always justified) that they will want to become members.

The range of activities is almost unlimited. Education for leisure is taken seriously by the Soviet authorities, and provided for by an extensive network of school clubs and out-of-school institutions, in which the Pioneer movement plays a leading part.[4] It provides or helps with clubs and 'circles' in the schools and elsewhere, in a variety of hobbies, arts, and crafts; these range from small painting or singing groups in an ordinary school to full-scale youth orchestras and ballet and drama groups in the Pioneer Palaces. Exhibitions, festivals, and competitions (known as 'Olympiads') are held frequently at local, republic, and Union level. This compensates to a great extent for the rather meagre treatment of the arts in the ordinary school curriculum. Many of the organization's centres have theatres where children can produce and act their own plays, and there are also over a hundred theatres, puppet and live, which present plays specially for children.

In sport the position is much the same, though rather more attention is paid to it in the school curriculum as well. Games taught in the schools can be pursued in clubs and at Pioneer centres, as can many additional sports, from football and hockey to tennis and fencing. There is the usual variety of festivals and competitions, described, rather surprisingly, as 'Spartakiads'—the term 'Olympiad' is used for contests in the arts, school subjects, chess, and the like. There are also over a thousand Children's Sports Schools, where pupils can go during the holidays or in their spare time for practice and instruction. Millions of children every summer attend Pioneer holiday camps in the Caucasus, on the Black Sea coast, or similar places. There, as might be expected, sporting activities figure prominently.

The youth organizations do a good deal to encourage interest in nature and provide opportunities for its study. The Pioneers organize festivals, meetings, and excursions of all kinds. There are naturalists' circles in many schools and 'Young Naturalists' Stations' in different parts of the country. Their main emphasis is on fostering interest in agriculture, but they also encourage nature conservation, and have wild-life sections for activities such as bird-watching or entomology. Similarly, Children's Excursion-Tourist Stations combine sight-seeing trips with the study of geography and natural resources, Children's Technical Stations run clubs for the pursuit of all kinds of skills from radio

engineering to model-making, and Children's Railways afford entertainment as well as training in technical skills and organizational responsibility.

But the most important of all out-of-school institutions for children are the 2,500 Pioneer Palaces and Houses, where they can go in their free time to follow their hobbies and interests. Some of these centres, especially in the more remote country areas, are modest or even ramshackle, with limited space, scanty equipment, and a shortage of trained leaders. Others, like the Anichkov Palace in Leningrad or the Vorontsov Palace in Odessa, are former residences of the old aristocracy converted to a new use. Others again are modern and often sumptuous.

In this last category, the largest and most recent is the 'Pioneer Republic' in Moscow, opened in June 1962. It is untypical in many ways: not only is it the newest building of the kind, but it is one of the few designed in uncompromisingly 'contemporary' style. There are few centres even approaching the variety of its facilities; but even if it cannot be taken as a typical example of Pioneer Palaces, it shows what the Pioneer Organization can, at its most generous, provide.

The building of the Pioneer Republic stands in spacious grounds which take in, among other things, a sports stadium with a seating capacity of seven thousand, and an artificial lake where the children can build and sail boats. Inside, the entrance hall comprises a glass-domed winter botanical garden and a pool; there is a 'Hall dedicated to Lenin' and a 'Hall of International Friendship of Children', which house pictures, murals, statues, exhibitions, and models appropriate to their titles. There are buffets, canteens, and an amusement hall for young children, with swings and roundabouts in the shape of aeroplanes, helicopters, and the now inevitable space-ships. There are two theatres: one, where the children perform plays they have written, set, costumed, and produced (with the aid of one adult supervisor) seats over three hundred, is acoustically excellent, and has all the latest equipment in the way of lighting-boards, wing-space, dressing-room accommodation, and so forth; the other, where adult professionals perform, is somewhat larger. Other facilities include: lecture-rooms and laboratories for ordinary schools subjects, gymnasia, ballet- and dancing-rooms, art- and music-rooms, a planetarium, aeromodelling

workshops, radio workshops, a photographic studio with darkrooms, and a film studio with all normal equipment and ancillary premises. Altogether, this newest of Moscow's twenty-five Pioneer Palaces provides for sixty circles and eight hundred groups; a child can join any two of these, which meet for seventy minutes twice a week, but no more, in case schoolwork suffers. One wing yet remains to be built: this is to be designed by the Young Architects' Circle (presumably with adult supervision and control) over the next year or so.

This gives some idea of the scope of the recreational side of Pioneer activity at its maximum. But the All-Union Lenin Pioneer Organization, to give it its full title, does not regard recreational provision as its only, or even its major aim. Primarily its functions are educational (political, moral, and social), as the Pioneer Rules, a code of conduct rather than a set of regulations, clearly show:

1. A Pioneer loves his Motherland and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
2. A Pioneer prepares himself to enter the Komsomol organization.
3. A Pioneer honours the memory of those who gave their lives in the struggle for freedom and for the prosperity of the Soviet Motherland.
4. A Pioneer is friendly to the children of all countries.
5. A Pioneer learns well.
6. A Pioneer is polite and well disciplined.
7. A Pioneer loves labour and is careful of public property.
8. A Pioneer is a good comrade: he cares for the young and helps the old.
9. A Pioneer is brave and unafraid of difficulties.
10. A Pioneer is honourable and values the honour of his detachment.
11. A Pioneer hardens himself, does physical exercises every day, and loves nature.

These rules are really a summary statement of the aims of moral education described earlier, for the Pioneer Organization is one of the principal means by which the educational system seeks to translate its aims into reality. Class opinion is mobilized mainly through the class Pioneer detachment, with ejection from its ranks a keenly felt disgrace, as one of its sanctions against offenders. The 'socially useful labour', regarded as so valuable in the inculcation of moral values, is organized by Pioneer groups. The responsibility of the individual member to be an example to other children is continually stressed, in

school and out. In short, from maintaining class order to the dissemination of social attitudes, from the organizing of school societies to the coaching of backward pupils, the Pioneer Organization is a constant and extremely effective ally of the teacher.

The structure of the Organization as well as its function is closely bound up with the school. The basic unit is the detachment (*otryad*), one for each class, further subdivided into 'links' (*zvena*) or small informal groups. The school as a whole has its brigade (*druzhina*).[5] All the Pioneers of the school elect a Brigade Council which coordinates most of the activities, guided by an adult Senior Pioneer Leader. The leader may be a professional, specially trained for this kind of work, but as these are in short supply[6] a member of the teaching staff often has to take over; Pioneer work is an essential part of every teacher's training course. Help is also given by Komsomols from outside the school, by student teachers, and in the case of schools with senior forms, by some of the older pupils.

The Komsomol

The all-Union Leninist Communist League of Youth (*Vsesoyuzny Leninskii Kommunisticheskii Soyuz Molodyozhi*[7], known as the V.L.K.S.M. or Komsomol for short), is less directly linked with the school than its junior counterpart. The age range—fifteen to twenty-seven—is significant; membership thus includes senior pupils, students in higher education,[8] members of the armed forces, and workers in industry and agriculture. It is essentially an adult organization, designed to link the top end of school life with the first years of normal work. Much of the membership is adolescent, yet the tone of the organization is studiously adult throughout; there are no symbolic ceremonies on entry, there is no trace of uniform (except for the 'Red Flag' badge), and the stress in its activities is much more on political work and theory than it is in the Pioneers.

The Komsomol, like the Pioneers, is a 'mass' organization, but the mass is smaller. Although it does not screen applicants as carefully as the Communist Party, it is not as open-armed as the Pioneers with their almost complete membership. Of all young people eligible to go into the Komsomol, only about a third do so. This is partly from choice: membership can involve sometimes arduous duties, which many young people prefer not

to assume; it can also involve loss of privacy, since members are expected to be an example to others, and are liable to be taken to task by their comrades if their conduct does not come up to exemplary standard.[9] But many of those who apply do so in vain; candidates have to prove their worth, not only politically but in study, work, and behaviour as well, and in spite of the falling-off in applications the Komsomol can still afford to pick and choose.

In structure, the Komsomol is closely modelled on the Communist Party. The basic unit, as in the Party, is the branch, always situated in the members' place of work—schools, universities, factories, farms, army units, and so on. Branches can be of any number from three to a hundred members, and are headed by branch secretaries. In the higher reaches, there are committees for each district (each with its bureau and secretary), for each region or city, and for each republic. The highest level is the Congress, which elects a Central Committee to continue with the work of the organization between the rather infrequent meetings of the full Congress. Branch secretaries are part-time and unpaid, but district secretaries and above are full-time professionals.

Admission to the Komsomol requires sponsorship, usually by the Council of the applicant's Pioneer Brigade; candidates not so sponsored need the recommendation of two established Komsomols or one established member of the Communist Party. Instead of the formal set of rules obtaining in the Pioneers, the Komsomol has a Charter listing a large number of members' rights and duties.[10] Rights include those of election to the various organs of the Komsomol, a vote in such elections, criticism of all persons and organs of the Komsomol, attendance when discussed by fellow-members, and so forth. Among the duties listed are the following: to improve one's knowledge of technology, to help implement Party policies and to explain them to others, to develop criticism and self-criticism, to set a good example in labour discipline, to take care of public property, to study Marxism-Leninism attentively, to be active in the Komsomol organization, and many others similar in content. Needless to say, not all members are as active as the Charter demands; in spite of constant attacks on 'passengers', and their occasional ejection from the organization, many remain. For the most part, however, the Komsomol's role as an

'agitation centre' for the spreading of acceptable attitudes among young people is maintained.

The work of the Komsomol is so widespread and diverse, extending into all fields of national life, that it would be inappropriate to try to examine it all here. The more strictly educational activities are channelled through its Congress, its publishing house, and the branches in schools and institutes of higher education.

The Congress of the Komsomol can serve as a forum for the discussion of general educational issues, thus forming a frame of reference in which the practical work at ground level can be done. The recent reforms of the educational system, for example, were first mooted at the Komsomol Congress. 'Bringing the schools closer to life' became a major topic of discussion right down the line. It is possible that some of the suggestions arising from such discussions had an effect on the final form of the law; and it is likely that having had it aired through the youth movement made it easier to put into effect.

At this level, too, the Komsomol exercises considerable control over the junior branches of the youth movement. It was the Central Committee in 1957 that raised the age for entry into the Pioneers to ten, and resurrected the Octobrists to fill the gap. The following year the Committee decided that there were too many Pioneers who were passive members and nothing more, and instituted a series of tests or 'steps', not unlike the Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class grades of the Scouts.[11] These steps involve the mastery of certain individual and collective skills, becoming more difficult with each step. Completion of the third grade will be expected of those applying for Komsomol membership.

The Komsomol organization also runs its own publishing house, *Molodaya Gvardiya*, or 'Young Guard'. As well as a variety of books for children and youths, it produces for the Pioneers the monthly magazine *Pioner*, and a twice-weekly newspaper, *Pionerskaya Pravda* (*Pioneers' Truth*), dealing with youth interests and activities all over the country, and the equivalent publications for the senior organization, the monthly *Molodoy Kommunist* (*Young Communist*) and *Komsomolskaya Pravda*.

School branches take a large share of the running of their schools. They elect committees to help with clubs and societies,

they run debates and meetings, they discuss problems of discipline, moral education, and scholastic progress with the director, and act as Pioneer leaders to help the younger children with their part in the various tasks. They also make the teacher's job easier by keeping their own members and classmates in control; since the Komsomol is harder to get into than the Pioneers, membership carries more social prestige. Expulsion is accordingly more disgraceful, and its threat even more effective.

In the universities and other institutes of higher education, the Komsomol plays an important role too. Each faculty has at least one branch; there is a committee for the whole institute, whose representatives sit on every administrative body in the college, such as the committee for the allocation of hostel accommodation, or for the awarding of students' bursaries. So great is its influence that a good record of Komsomol work is considered along with the academic record when deciding which graduates will be given the best jobs.

As in the schools, the college Komsomols organize socially useful work among the students, but on a more ambitious scale, such as assisting with the harvest on collective farms, working on building sites for community projects, helping at Pioneer camps during the holidays, tutoring fellow-students who have difficulty with their work, and so on. Even major projects such as the building of the Leningrad Underground after the war owe a great deal to student labour organized in this way. Student branches also concern themselves with the conduct of other students, using meetings, discussions, and wall newspapers to criticize the slackers and praise the conscientious.

One of the main attractions of Komsomol membership for some is the prospect of its leading, eventually, to membership of the Communist Party. It is debatable whether the ordinary Party member can exert much influence on policy, but for those aspiring to the leadership this is the only way up. There can be little doubt that the leaders exercise considerable power, at local as well as national level; for all the duties of membership (and the dangers, too, when times are troubled), admission to the 'corridors of power' is a great advantage to the ambitious in most walks of life. But it is extremely difficult to become a communist in the Soviet Union; so particular is the Party that all members and candidate members (probationers) total only four and a half per cent of the population. Political respectability is

not enough; the aspiring member must prove his worth in work, study, and in voluntary effort of some kind for the common good. Even this, judging by the numbers, is not enough, but for anyone who seeks to climb the ladder of influence, a good record of active work in the Pioneers and the Komsomol is the best start he can have.

1. *Sovietskaya Pedagogika*, October 1943. The 'Rules for Pupils' were adopted in August 1943 and have been in force ever since. Every pupil has them on his individual school identity card.

2. This scheme is a draft programme prepared by the Bureau of Moral Education of the Institute of History of Theory of Pedagogy of the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. It is more fully dealt with in Bereday, Brickman, and Read, *The Changing Soviet School*, pp. 427–37.

3. The All-Union Lenin Pioneer Organization (*Vsesoyuznaya Pionerskaya Organizatsiya imeni V. I. Lenina*) is officially described as 'a mass children's organization which brings up children in the spirit of love and devotion to the Motherland, friendship between nations and proletarian internationalism; it draws Pioneers and schoolchildren into public life, develops in them a conscientious attitude towards study discipline, love of work, and curiosity; it brings up children to be all-round, developed individuals, conscientious, healthy, courageous, full of the joy of life, and unafraid of difficulties, future builders of Communism'. (*Bolshaya Sovietskaya Entsiklopediya*, 1955.)

4. Strictly speaking, many of the out-of-school institutions mentioned here are not run directly by the Pioneer Organization. The Young Naturalists' Stations, for example, are directed by the Central Station for Young Naturalists, and the Children's Technical Stations by a similar central body; many facilities provided by the Pioneers, such as holiday camps, are duplicated by others run by trade unions and similar bodies. The Ministries of Education and Culture, in particular, are responsible for a variety of services, such as the Children's Theatres. This spreading of responsibility, however, makes little difference in practice; the entire network of recreational education in the U.S.S.R. is so closely bound up with the work of the Pioneer Organization that it seems appropriate to deal with all the children's institutions in this section. Clubs and circles for older pupils, students in higher education, and young workers, are coordinated in much the same way by the Komsomol.

5. The word *druzhina* does not mean a brigade in the military sense (*brigada*); it is connected with the word for 'friend', and is often used to describe various kinds of voluntary groups, such as Workers' Brigades, armed or otherwise. Its connotations are militant without being military.

6. There is a high turnover rate among professional youth leaders. One reason is that many of them do the job for a couple of years or so after finishing a Secondary Specialized School, then go on to take a full teacher's training course.

7. The word 'Komsomol' is, of course, a compound of the initial syllables of the last three words. This is typical of the Soviet habit of giving things extremely unwieldy titles, then reducing them to manageable size by running together lopped-off bits of the key words. Such terms have added considerably to the Russian vocabulary since 1917.

8. Over eighty per cent of all students are Komsomol members, at least nominally. (*Partiynaya Zhizn* No. 1, January 1958.)

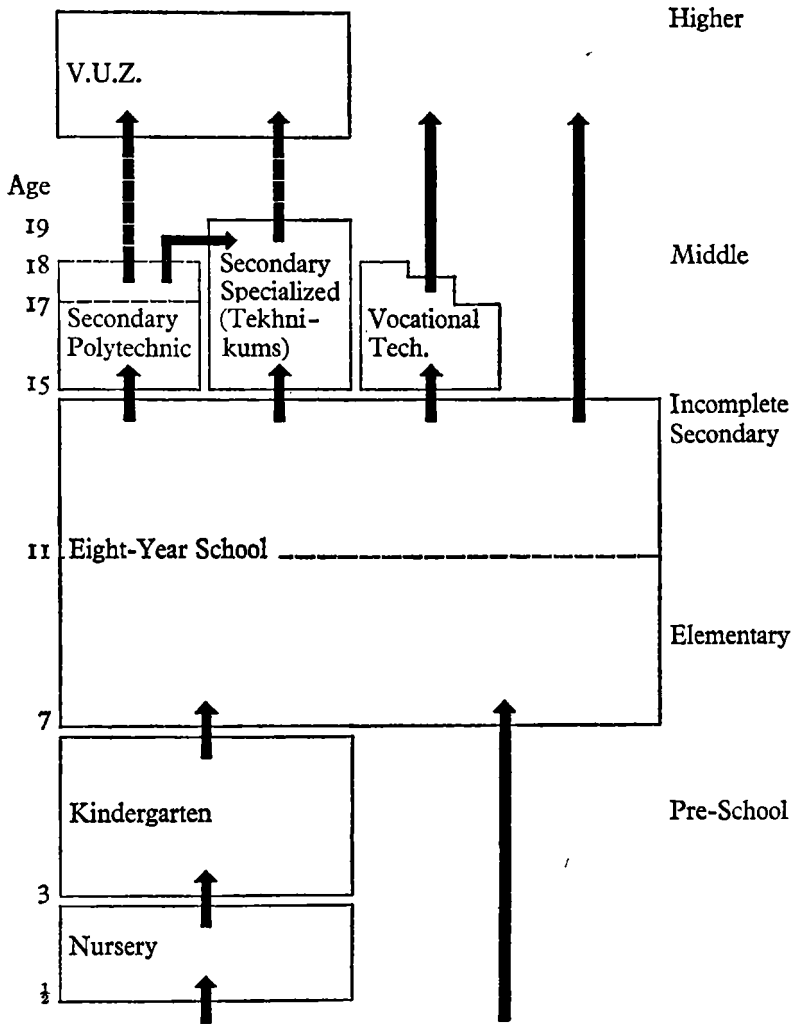
9. Membership also necessarily means a surrender of some personal freedom. For example, a youth may go to church if he wishes, but a Komsomol who does so is liable to be severely criticized or even expelled, since adherence to any religion is incompatible with the movement's principles. Some Komsomols do in fact go to church; that they are not expelled may be due to negligence or apathy in their branches, or to the hope that they will soon get over the habit. Membership of the Communist Party involves similar limitations, but there seems to be greater strictness in enforcing them.

10. *Resolyutsii i Dokumenty XII Syezda VLKSM*
(Molodaya Gvardiya, Moscow, 1954.)

11. The three 'steps' are detailed in *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, 31 July 1958. The first of them consists of the following requirements:

1. Know why we celebrate the great holidays—23 February, 8 March, 22 April, 1 and 2 May, 9 May, 7 and 8 November, 5 December.
2. Learn the hymn of the U.S.S.R. and your Republic.
3. Know the meaning of the Red Banner, the Pioneer Scarf and Pin, the salute of the Young Pioneers.
4. Know the great deeds of the Pioneer Organization and its heroes.
5. Know the heroes after whom your brigade, detachment, school, and street are named, and local heroes.
6. Know the song of the Young Pioneers.
7. Make something necessary for school work, together with your 'link'.
8. Make something necessary for the Pioneer Room of your school, together with your 'link'.
9. Help your elders with the housework: set the table, wash the dishes, make something for your home.
10. Plant trees or flowers and care for them.
11. Care for useful birds, make bird-tables and bird-houses.
12. Learn to distinguish poisonous mushrooms and berries from edible ones.
13. Learn to take care of your person: sew on buttons, darn your socks, make your own bed, wash yourself and your underwear.
14. Do your morning physical exercises.
15. Learn how to run quickly, throw a ball accurately, jump, ski, swim, and balance on a plank.
16. Learn how to form a line-up, distinguish Pioneer signals on trumpet and drum, number off.
17. Learn three to five games of various kinds—table games, games of movement, etc.

18. Go on at least two one-day marches, know how to pack a rucksack, how to orient yourself by compass, how to make a fire and cook on it, etc.
19. Learn two or three Pioneer songs and mass dances with your comrades.



The Soviet educational system (after 1958)

4 The Schools

Since the reforms of 1958, the Soviet school has been in a state of change from which it has not yet emerged. These reforms are not only the most radical changes in the educational system since the 1930s; they may also be reflections of important changes in Soviet society at large. To appreciate this, it will be necessary to outline the school system as it was before the reforms, to examine the present system, and to attempt some analysis of the reasons and arguments (public and otherwise) behind these changes. In this way we may obtain some clues about what is happening in the changing structure of society in the U.S.S.R. at the present time.

Before the Reforms—The Old System

Pre-School Education

Although compulsory schooling, then as now, began at the age of seven, there was a fairly extensive but voluntary and incomplete network of nurseries and kindergartens for younger children. As this stage of education has not been fundamentally altered by the recent reforms, we can defer examination of it till we come to look at the new system.

Schools of General Education

The great majority of Soviet children before 1958 (and many for several years after that) received the bulk of their education at general schools of three types: *four-year* or *primary* schools, from the ages of seven to eleven; *seven-year* or *incomplete second-*

ary schools, from the ages of seven to fourteen; and *ten-year* or *complete secondary* schools, from seven to seventeen. These schools all offered the same courses; there was no difference in the curriculum or the standard of teaching, only in the stages reached.

The four-year schools were found only in remote areas. At one time there were some parts where this was the only available schooling, but it was claimed that this state of affairs had ceased long before 1958. On completion of the four-year course, all children went on to the nearest seven-year school to pursue their studies from where they had left off.

In 1958, the *seven-year* school was still the standard in most areas, and for most children was the end of their general education; many could, and did, go on to the ten-year school to continue their studies, but since this often meant a move to the nearest town, many pupils dropped out at fourteen.

The *ten-year* school was the most complete form of general schooling. From the age of seven to eleven, children were taught by one class teacher, and by specialists thereafter. Normally there was no break at eleven or twelve, as happens in this country, the primary and secondary stages being organized in the same school. The curriculum was identical with that of the four- and seven-year schools, but was taken farther to the point of the 'Certificate of Maturity' (*Attestat zrelosti*, roughly comparable to the G.C.E.)[1] and the possibility of entry to higher education. Like the other forms of general school, it was co-educational, unstreamed, and comprehensive throughout. The course was highly formal and academic, with little or no choice of subjects. The school week consisted of twenty-four hours for the first form, rising to thirty-four for the tenth. Some subjects, like singing and drawing, tended to drop out under the pressure of more academic studies, but the general pattern was for the number of subjects to increase gradually as the course progressed. In the first form, for example, there were thirteen hours of instruction in Russian language and literature, six in mathematics, two in physical education, one each in singing and drawing, and one in socially useful labour. The next two years saw little change, but in the fourth form history, geography, and biology made their appearance with two hours each. In the fifth form specialist teaching began, and a foreign language was introduced with four hours a week, usually English or German.

Drawing and singing vanished as regular school subjects after the sixth form, and others were brought in, until the tenth-form timetable looked like this: four hours per week of Russian language and literature, six of mathematics, four of history, one on the Constitution of the U.S.S.R., four of physics, one of astronomy, four of chemistry, one of psychology, three of the foreign language, three of physical education, one of technical drawing, two to four of 'fundamentals of production'—practice in agriculture, machine study, electrical equipment, and the like. Biology and geography had dropped out at the end of the ninth form. There was also provision for excursions of various kinds, later extended to include spells of practical work, experience in industry and agriculture, instruction in car or tractor driving, and so forth. Even with the increased amount of practical work-training, however, the base of the school was overwhelmingly academic, more closely geared to the needs of higher education than of industry, and this was the kind of course that most children had to undergo.

By 1958, the ten-year school was already the normal means of general education in some areas, especially the major cities. Official policy[2] was to make it compulsory for all Soviet children eventually, but this objective was dropped for reasons that will be seen presently.

Vocational Schools

This was a mixed category, including 'Tekhnikums', or specialized secondary schools, 'Labour Reserve' or trade schools, 'Schools for Working and Rural Youth', and so on. Some of these catered for graduates of the ten-year schools, but for the most part they were courses with a vocational bias that filled in between the seven-year school and full-time work. The courses varied greatly in length, depending on previous experience and the kind of job envisaged, but ranged from five years to two years or even less.[3] Of pupils completing the seven-year courses who did not go on to a ten-year school, the majority took some kind of instruction in one type of vocational school or another.

Special Schools

These can be classified in three categories: schools for handicapped children, cadet schools, and special schools for the artistically gifted. Unlike the normal general educational

schools, these were selective, and concerned only a minority. Basically they were ten-year schools, but admission was still possible up to the age of ten or thereabouts; the leaving age was similarly flexible. As these schools have been retained fundamentally unaltered by the recent reforms, they can best be considered along with the rest of the new school system.

The New System

Pre-School Institutions

Pre-school education in the U.S.S.R. is neither compulsory nor available to all, nor is it free of charge. Nevertheless, it is expanding, and in some places can take in the majority of eligible children. Further, Soviet educationists increasingly stress the importance to the child's development of expert pre-school guidance. Accordingly, although they are not part of the compulsory system, these institutions can fittingly be included in an outline of the country's education provision. They are of two kinds: nursery (*yasli*) for very young children, and kindergarten (*detski sad*) for children up to compulsory school age.

Nurseries normally accept children between the ages of six months and three years, and are often run by factories, offices, collective farms, and other enterprises for the children of their employees. Others are provided by the Ministries of Health and other public bodies. Most of these institutions, especially in the towns, operate all the year round, but some are organized on a seasonal basis; many collective farms find them necessary at harvest-time, for example, when the mothers are required in the fields, but do not provide them for the rest of the year. The functions of the nurseries are not primarily educational in the sense of providing any kind of formal instruction; they are more concerned with the physical welfare of the children, in seeing that they have healthy surroundings and medical care—doctors and nurses are usually on the staff—and with acting as institutionalized baby-sitters to release the mothers for work, thus taking over the traditional role of the *babushka* or grandmother in the Russian family. Apart from physical and medical care, the activities in the nursery consist largely of supervised play and rest. Teaching does not begin until the kindergarten stage.

Kindergartens, like nurseries, are often provided by farms and

industrial plants, though some are run by local departments of education; factories and farms which provide them are responsible for their maintenance and repair, but come under the jurisdiction of the education authorities, and are open to inspection and control. Hours tend to vary according to the parents' working conditions, but most kindergartens are open from eight in the morning till six in the evening, six days a week, to allow for differences in parents' shifts. Some children are boarders, going home only at the weekends. Apart from doctors and nurses, the staffs of these establishments include teachers qualified in preschool work; some of them have taken the full course at a Pedagogic Institute (a Teachers' Training College of a higher standard), but most of them, as yet, have been trained at specialized secondary schools, where they have received a more modest, if relevant, preparation for the job. As in the nurseries, parents have to pay a fee as a contribution to the children's upkeep. This varies a good deal from place to place, and is adjusted to the parents' incomes, but seems to range generally between a maximum of ten roubles a month (about £4 by the official exchange rate)[4] to a minimum of 2.50 roubles (£1). If parents are unable to pay, their trade unions find part or all of the cost. In spite of the expense, there are far more applicants for kindergartens than there are places.

The 'curriculum' of the kindergarten is more methodical than the nursery programmes, but much less so than the ordinary schools. The age range, from three to seven, is fairly wide, and children are divided into age groups (a rough approximation to classes) while they are there. Much of the time, as before, is spent attending to the children's health, making sure they have plenty of exercise, fresh air, rest, a balanced diet, and medical attention. The children are regularly examined by the doctor, treatment is given when necessary, and those with severe defects are passed on to the special schools for the handicapped. A good deal of trouble is taken to make the children 'health conscious' by providing them with elementary health knowledge and training them in hygienic habits.

Elementary instruction is given in the artistic and, to some extent, in the academic fields. There are drawing lessons of a rather formal and arid kind, but some free drawing is done as well, though there is much less of this than in a typical infant class in Britain; clay and plasticine are also used. Music lessons

usually take the form of group singing, dancing, musical games, and so forth, but there is no attempt to deal with theory at this stage. The 'academic' side is tackled at a very elementary level. For the most part, it is concerned with giving the children an increased vocabulary and a greater command of their native language by means of story-telling, word-games, and the like. They are also taught to count up to ten and do simple oral arithmetic. For the older children—the five- to seven-year-olds—there are some basic lessons in reading and writing, but the standards reached are very uneven. One result of this practice is that first-form teachers in the ordinary schools have to spend some time finding out what levels of literacy their various charges have reached, before trying to level them up. It is generally claimed by Soviet teachers that the differences can be ironed out within a month or so; when it becomes possible to provide kindergarten places for all, the problem will no longer arise—but this state of affairs is a long way off yet. A number of kindergartens even give simple lessons in foreign languages. These are regarded as experimental, and there are few of them at the moment, but they appear to be popular, both with the authorities and parents, and are likely to increase in the future.

Teachers in the Soviet Union, as elsewhere, are becoming increasingly convinced of the value of pre-school education. Quite apart from the convenience to the parents (the vast majority of mothers in the U.S.S.R. carry on working as a matter of course), it presents a unique opportunity of influencing the child's development—social, moral, aesthetic, even political—when he is at the most plastic stage. Great though the demand is, however, only a minority receive any form of pre-school education. Over the entire country, only about twenty per cent of eligible children go to nurseries or kindergartens. In the major cities, as usual, the position is markedly better; in Leningrad, for example, the figure is over forty per cent, and in some parts of the city as high as sixty per cent. Gains since the war have, on the whole, been slow in this field of education compared with others, but the authorities have declared their intention of making places available for forty-five per cent by 1965. Even if this is achieved, they have a long way to go before kindergartens are generally available for all children, though it may be accomplished in the cities. Pre-school institutions, though regarded as important, come below higher education

and the ordinary schools on the list of priorities, and will have to wait their lengthy turn for any money and attention that happens to be available.

The Eight-Year School (*Vosmiletnaya shkola*)

This is now the basic school for nearly all Soviet children. They enter on the first of September after their seventh birthdays (*Pervoe sentyabrya* is something of a national festival), and stay on until they have completed eight full years in the school. Though most of them will be about fifteen by the time they are in the eighth form, the fifteenth birthday does not in itself carry the right of release—they must finish the course. Children who have had to repeat classes are allowed to leave at the end of the school year in which they reached the age of sixteen.

The eight-year school is organized in two stages: elementary (*nachalnaya shkola*), comprising the first four forms, and secondary (*srednaya shkola*) from the fifth form (about the age of eleven) to the eighth. As with the old seven-year school, of which this is an improved version, the children are taught by a general class teacher for all subjects (except physical education) in the elementary grades, and by subject specialists from the fifth form onwards. Each form has a 'class adviser', one of their specialist teachers with the additional duty of keeping an eye on the welfare, progress, and behaviour of the class in their schoolwork as a whole. The division into elementary and secondary grades is an internal convenience, and does not imply any selection and transfer of the 'eleven-plus' type. Except for the very few children who transfer to special or boarding schools, the eight-year school takes the pupils through their course from seven to fifteen in the same building, co-educational, comprehensive, and unstreamed throughout.

In the fifth form a foreign language is introduced for all children. Most schools offer only one; English is the most usual, with German following close behind, and French and Spanish bringing up the rear. In keeping with recent declarations on the need to improve conversational fluency, classes are divided for language teaching into groups of twenty or less (a typical class numbers about forty pupils). This, at least, is the general idea, but it is not always done; language teaching in the Soviet schools, for all the official uniformity of method, varies greatly in quality from the admirable to the dull and ineffective. A

number of experimental schools begin languages earlier, in the second form or even before it, and teach other subjects in that language as soon as possible thereafter. These schools are being held up in their development by a shortage of teachers sufficiently qualified to put over their own specialities in a foreign tongue, but they are on the increase,[5] and appear to be popular with parents—applications, at any rate, always exceed the number of places. Most of these are English, German, or French schools, but there is a handful of others using Chinese, Hindi, or other less familiar but doubtless important languages.

The curriculum of the eight-year school does not differ greatly from that obtaining under the old system. There is the same pattern of increasing the number of subjects as the course progresses, the same stress on scientific subjects, the same highly academic content throughout. The seven-year-old comes to school in the first form for four hours a day, six days a week. Lessons normally last for forty-five minutes, with two twenty-minute intervals during the day. As before, this time is spent on Russian (thirteen hours), mathematics (six), physical education (two), and one each on music, drawing, and work-study. The programme is not quite as narrow as it looks, for the term 'Russian language and literature' can cover as wide a field in a Russian school as 'English' does in ours. By the time the children are in their eighth and final year, they are attending for an average of five hours a day, six days a week, their time being spent thus: five hours of Russian literature and language, six of mathematics, three of history, two of geography, three of the foreign language, three of physics, two of chemistry, two of biology, three of physical education, three of labour training, and two of 'socially useful labour'. There are some minor variations where conditions require; in physical education,[6] for example, ski-ing is compulsory from the third form, but where climatic conditions make this impossible the time is allocated to gymnastics, athletics, and games such as volleyball and basketball. But, apart from minor departures of this kind, the basic pattern remains. Moral education is not separately timetabled, but introduced, as we have seen, through the medium of other subjects.

The main change made in the curriculum by the reforms of 1958 is the greater emphasis on work-training in all its forms. This was a feature of the old seven-year school too, but has been

increased in the eight-year school, which is described officially as an 'incomplete secondary labour polytechnical school of general education'. Work-training begins in the first form with simple lessons in the manipulation of tools and materials—sewing, modelling, paper-cutting, etc. Carpentry with allied skills is introduced in the fourth form, and various mechanical skills are added later. There is less manual training of this kind for girls, who spend some of their time in the higher forms on the group of activities variously described as 'domestic science', 'homecraft', 'domestic economy', or something such, including cookery, needlework, home management, and so forth. But the girls do receive industrial manual training as well, while the boys appear to have some 'domestic' instruction along with their other practical work. This difference of degree in the time spent on industrial and domestic skills is practically the only concession made by the Soviet school to sexual differences. The fact that the girls almost certainly will be workers *as well as* wives and mothers doubtless has something to do with it.

At this stage there is no attempt to prepare the children for any particular occupation; the training is polytechnical, not vocational. By the end of the eighth form, the pupils have all had some experience of woodwork and metalwork, of machine tools as well as hand tools; they have had practice in the care of plants and animals on the school plots or on visits to collective farms (or on their own farms in the case of rural schools); more important, they have had instruction on the relevance of scientific theory to its practical use in industry and agriculture. Also, during the secondary stage, they have visited and done some work in different kinds of industrial enterprise, both as part of their general experience of industrial production, and as a means of helping them think over the kind of job they would like to go in for later. But this is as far as it goes; direct trade training comes, if at all, at a later stage.

The curriculum described here is, of course, for children whose mother tongue is Russian. In eight-year schools for children of other nationalities, teaching is carried out in the national languages, Russian normally being introduced in the second form. In many of the minority republics there are sizeable numbers of Russian residents, whose children can go to Russian-language schools;[7] these are just like those in the R.S.F.S.R., except that they have to learn in addition Armen-

ian, Georgian, Uzbek, or whatever the language of the republic concerned happens to be—to the annoyance of many Russian parents living temporarily in the area, who are faced with the prospect of their children having to tackle two or three new languages in turn as their appointments shift from place to place. In other respects, the curriculum of the non-Russian schools is very much the same, including a foreign (i.e. non-Soviet) language.

The policy of providing medical attention is continued in the eight-year school. Each has a doctor and nurse on the staff, though these may be shared with another school. Their duties, apart from on-the-spot treatment, include talks on health and hygiene to pupils and parents, conducting regular medical inspections, and arranging for inspection by dentists and medical specialists as well. The children are also X-rayed every session. As the cities are much better off for doctors than the countryside, it is likely that the rural schools have considerable difficulty in keeping such an ambitious programme going.

Class instruction is supplemented by homework, which can be a heavy burden at times. In theory, homework ought to be limited to one hour a night in the elementary grade, and two hours in the secondary. In practice, this is exceeded in many cases, especially in the upper forms. This is due partly to lack of coordination between subject specialists—a familiar enough phenomenon in this country—although a record is supposed to be kept; it is also due in some cases to over-optimistic estimates of what can reasonably be expected in the time. Certainly, there are frequent complaints in the educational Press and *Family and School*. One attempt to improve the situation is the organization by some schools of supervised homework sessions on the premises.

It is at the eight-year school that the Pioneer Organization does most of its work. Every school is supposed to have a Pioneer room for extra-curricular activities; these, as might be expected, range from the ample through the barely adequate to the downright meagre. Moreover, there is still a shortage of buildings, so that many of the schools still work on a shift system, the younger classes coming in the morning and the older ones in the afternoon; although the children, therefore, are free for other activities, the school premises and many of the teaching staff may not be available. There are, of course, the

Pioneer Palaces and Houses, but it is generally felt that a close link should be kept between the school and non-scholastic activities, which is one reason why the authorities are anxious to do away with the remnants of schooling by shifts.

Unlike the nursery and kindergarten, the eight-year school is both free and compulsory. Parents, however, do have to pay for their children's textbooks, materials, and uniforms. If they are unable to afford the expense, they can have these things provided free, and the cost is met from the fund administered by the parents' committee; the same applies to meal vouchers for the dining-room. For the rest, the costs vary: books are comparatively cheap, an average-sized hard-back costing in the region of three or four shillings, paperbacks proportionately less. Uniforms do not appear to be compulsory (a few children can be observed in ordinary clothes) but the great majority do have them—grey trousers and button-up jackets with peaked caps for the boys[8] (though most of the older ones do not appear to bother with the caps), and a brown dress for the girls, with a white smock for special occasions and a black one for the rest of the time. Clothes are expensive in the Soviet Union, but children's clothes are cheaper by comparison: a girl's complete school uniform can be bought in a Moscow store for a total of eighteen roubles (over £7 by the exchange rate), and a boy's for 15.60 roubles (about £6 12s.). Quality varies; they can be bought for less or more, but many mothers prefer to make their children's clothes themselves. Those who do can get the patterns free from the school.

Compulsory schooling for the Soviet child ends with the eighth form; some pupils leave for regular jobs at this stage and pursue their schooling no further. (Estimates of this number vary: it is about fifteen per cent in the major cities such as Moscow and Leningrad, much more elsewhere. Probably over twenty-five per cent leave school at fifteen over the U.S.S.R. as a whole, though more of these take up continuation classes later on.) Like the eight-year school, the next stage is free of charge, and it is claimed that there is room for all pupils who wish to go on, and that those who leave at fifteen do so from choice, not necessity. The rest continue their education at different types of middle schools, which offer courses of general education combined with polytechnical and vocational training in varying degrees.

Middle Schools

(Note: The terms used to describe different types of school can be rather confusing. Middle schools are sometimes described as 'secondary' or 'complete' secondary schools, while the upper forms of the eight-year schools are also termed 'secondary'. Some of the confusion arises from thinking too closely along the lines of our own systems, where the basic pattern runs thus: (1) primary, followed by a break, (2) secondary, and another break, and (3) higher or further education. The new Soviet pattern can be summarized thus: (1) elementary and (2) incomplete secondary, with no break, both in the eight-year school. Then comes the break, followed by (3) complete secondary, in the middle schools, then another break, then (4) higher or further education. It would also be less confusing if Soviet and other commentators remembered more often to make it clear, when talking about secondary education, whether they mean the complete or incomplete stage.)

There are over 130 different types of middle school in the U.S.S.R., all providing some degree of general education and some kind of work training. They can be classified for the sake of convenience as follows:

(a) Secondary Labour Polytechnical Schools of General Education and Industrial Training. The full title being cumbersome, we shall use the shortened form, *Secondary Polytechnical Schools* (*Srednie politekhnicheskie shkoly*).

These schools provide a three-year course, taking the student up to the age of eighteen, or a two-year course to the age of seventeen (see p. 100–1). They are often found in the same buildings as eight-year schools; when this happens, the entire institution is referred to as an eleven-year school (*odinadtsatiletnaya shkola*) (the nearest thing under the new system to the old ten-year school), and the secondary polytechnical part of it is referred to simply as the ninth, tenth, and eleventh forms. Not all pupils go straight from the eighth to the ninth form, however; many come in from other eight-year schools, and many others leave for other middle schools where their particular interests are better catered for.

About two thirds of the student's time in the secondary polytechnical school is spent on general educational subjects. The range is much as before—Russian literature and language, history, social studies, geography, a foreign language, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, technical drawing. A new departure is the provision of two hours a week throughout the course for optional subjects, which gives

students a chance to specialize further or broaden their curriculum in school time, if they so wish.

The remaining third of the time, on average, is spent on work-study, both theoretical and practical. Some of this is done in the school's own workshops, printing-presses, experimental plots, etc., but for the most part it is done outside the school. Unlike the eight-year school, the secondary polytechnic concentrates on one particular trade or occupation—machine-tooling, lathe-operating, electronics, textile technology, and so forth—most of the practice being carried out in the appropriate factory. The schools usually have an arrangement with local plants whereby the students work for continuous periods at the bench, the factories having adjusted their régime (often at the cost of some dislocation) to fit them in. The students of Moscow School No. 584, for instance, do their practical work in the Moscow Carburettor Plant, those of Moscow School No. 273 in the Severyanin Engineering Factory; Leningrad School No. 289 has similar arrangements with the local Rubber Tyre Plant, and Kiev School No. 72 with the Krasny Excavator Factory. Such arrangements also exist in the country between the secondary polytechnic schools and the collective farms. While actually working in the fields or at the bench, students are paid at the normal apprenticeship rates.

At the end of the three-year course, students can take the certificate of secondary education, which entitles them to apply for entry to an institute of higher education. Their trade training does not commit them to taking up that particular job. The idea behind the combination of general and industrial education is that they can emerge from their schooling fitted for industrial work and academic studies alike. Competition for higher education being what it is, this can often be a solid advantage.

(b) *Secondary Specialized Schools* (*Srednie spetsialnye uchebnye zavedeniya*) These middle schools resemble the secondary polytechnical schools in offering a combination of general and vocational training, though here the vocational element predominates, with about twice as much time as the general. These schools are sometimes known as *tekhnikums*, and provide courses for students wishing to enter semi-professional occupations, such as draughtsmanship, clerical work, librarianship, book-keeping, club organizing, nursing, and the like. Between three and four hundred occupations are catered for in

this way. Some pre-school and elementary school teachers still receive their training at schools of this kind ('Pedagogic Schools'), but the aim of the authorities is to have them all go through a college course, like the rest of their colleagues, as soon as possible. Students can obtain both a professional qualification and a certificate of secondary education, and are eligible to apply for admission to higher educational institutes; the vocational bias of the school does not necessarily commit them to the job, but serves to familiarize them with practical work, gives a professional qualification to those not proceeding to higher levels, provides a second string for the bow of the student who fails to get into college, and a basis of practical experience for the one who does. The majority, however, go straight into the appropriate jobs on completion of their courses.

Students who have come to the Secondary Specialized Schools directly from the eight-year schools study for four years; two-year courses, with a much greater emphasis on the vocational side, are also provided for those who have completed a full secondary education. For administrative purposes, the Specialized Schools come under the jurisdiction of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, unlike the Secondary Polytechnical Schools, which are controlled by the republic ministries of education.

(c) *Vocational Technical Schools* (*Professionalno-tekhnicheskie uchilishcha*) These are sometimes referred to as 'trade schools' or by the old name of 'labour reserve schools'. They are much more specialized than the two types of middle school described so far; the main emphasis is on learning a particular trade. General subjects are limited to between fifteen and twenty per cent of the time, the rest being spent in field or workshop. Courses last for between six months and three years, depending on the trade involved (about eight hundred different occupations are dealt with) and students are paid at apprenticeship rates. The course culminates with the award of a trade diploma. It is theoretically possible to go on from these schools to higher education, but to do so the student will have to eke out the rather meagre amount of general education. Some in fact go on to polytechnical institutes and the like, later, after studying in continuation courses in their spare time, but most students with their eyes on a college place will select some other type of middle school.

Administratively, these schools are separate from the rest of the educational system, and come under the jurisdiction of the State Committee of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers on Vocational-Technical Education. Training for many less highly skilled trades is still given 'on the job', not in a school, but the present trend is towards having more and more skills catered for in the vocational technical schools.

(d) *Part-time Schools* Secondary polytechnic and secondary specialized schooling can be had on a part-time as well as a full-time basis. This may take the form of *evening and shift secondary schools*, sometimes referred to as 'Schools for Working Youth' and 'Schools for Rural Youth', and are intended for young people who for some reason were unable or unwilling to continue with full-time education after the age of fifteen. Students normally attend in the evenings if they live in the towns, although such schools are organized on a seasonal basis in the country. Alternatively, students can continue their formal education through the *correspondence schools*, which cater mainly for those in the more remote areas. Both types of schools offer substantially the same curriculum as their full-time counterparts. Part-time education has been greatly extended in the last few years, and there is every indication that this trend will continue.

In theory, it is possible to go on to higher education from any kind of middle school, but it is clear that students of secondary polytechnical schools, in view of the greater amount of time spent on general studies, will have a better chance than anyone else in the fierce competition for entry to the colleges and universities. The Soviet authorities claim that it is entirely a matter of free choice what kind of middle school, if any, a pupil enters, so that no general selective procedure is necessary. This may be true of *types*, but certainly does not apply to particular schools. It may be true that no pupil who wishes to go to, say, a secondary polytechnical school has to make do with something else, though this is hard to verify; but some particular schools are so popular that there has to be some kind of selection. In Leningrad, for example, the middle schools offering courses in Computer Programming or Electronics are inundated with applications, ten for every place. When this happens, selection is by competitive examination, taking into account the cumulative record of the applicant's work and conduct that has fol-

lowed him all the way through the eight-year school. Unsuccessful applicants then have to select a school with a less sought-after vocational bias, though it is claimed that they can still have the same *category* of middle school, if not the particular one they wanted.

Special Schools and Boarding Schools

So far we have been concerned with the schools attended by the great majority of Soviet schoolchildren. Side by side with the ordinary system, however, there are a number of schools that take in specially selected groups of children, for one reason or another. These include schools that offer a special course significantly different from the ordinary establishments, and the growing number of eight-year and eleven-year boarding schools.

Special Schools

These are of three main types: (a) special schools for the handicapped; (b) army and navy cadet schools; (c) schools for the artistically gifted.

(a) *Special Schools for the Handicapped* Special schools for physically and mentally handicapped children are classified according to the seriousness of the cases; whereas the Ministries of Education are responsible for those dealing with children who can be trained, more serious cases, such as cripples and sufferers from congenital defects, go to schools run by the Ministries of Public Health, while the really hopeless ones, such as congenital idiots, cretins, and the like, are cared for in institutions under the authority of the Ministries of Public Insurance.

There are special schools for blind and partially sighted children, the deaf and the partially hearing, the deaf and dumb, children suffering from serious speech defects, children with brain damage or brain disease, the emotionally and psychologically disturbed, and so forth. Many of these institutions are residential, but some function as day schools. The work done is partly remedial—exercises for the improvement of speech, for example—and partly compensatory, such as training blind children in the use of Braille lettering and teaching them work-skills that lie within their compass. As far as possible, the normal school curriculum is used, even with the mentally retarded, and only departed from or slowed down with reluctance, if the

children really cannot cope. It is in keeping with the Soviet suspicion of the idea of inherited intelligence that cases of mental backwardness are usually attributed to some kind of brain damage; mental and physical defects are regarded as different aspects of the same thing. Intelligence tests and similar devices are not, of course, used at all. Children are sent to schools for the mentally defective on the basis of observation, at school or kindergarten, over a period of up to one year. Special schools include 'forest' convalescent schools, where children in delicate health or suffering from such diseases as tuberculosis can receive general education combined with medical care, and can have the advantage of fresh air and good climatic conditions to help their recovery.

Special schools for the handicapped are staffed by nurses, doctors, pediatricians, and teachers who have taken courses in 'defectology' in the Pedagogic Institutes. These schools also have the usual Pioneer organizations, and Parents' Committees function where possible, though this can rarely be managed where the schools are far from the children's homes, as are the forest schools and other boarding establishments. Most visitors report that the atmosphere in the handicapped schools is more relaxed than in the ordinary ones, with much less pressure on the children and much greater allowances made for inability to cope with the work. Generally, the object is to remedy the deficiencies if this can be done at all, and to pursue the children's intellectual, polytechnical, and moral education as far as possible if it cannot.

(b) *Military Cadet Schools* These are normally eleven-year boarding schools of general education which prepare cadets for the Soviet armed forces. There are two kinds: *Suvorov Schools* for the army and air force, and *Nakhimov Schools* for the navy. Founded in 1943, they were originally intended for the orphans of military personnel who had been killed in the Second World War. At the present time, children, especially orphans, of members of the armed forces are given preference. Otherwise entry is by competitive examination. Apart from military and naval studies, ranging from small-arms handling and barrack-square drill to tactics and strategy, the course is much the same as in other eleven-year schools.

(c) *Schools for the Artistically Gifted* As a marked exception in an otherwise comprehensive system, the U.S.S.R. has a

number of special schools for children who show a high level of talent in one of the fine arts, such as music, drama, ballet, painting and sculpture, and so forth. There are not many of these—there are only about fifty special art schools in the entire country, for example, and sixteen ballet schools.[9] The standard of work is high throughout, and some of them, like the Kirov Ballet School in Leningrad, have produced world-renowned figures in their fields. Places are filled by competition among children from the ordinary schools, normally at the end of the first year, although entry can take place for two or three years after that. There also appears to be a certain amount of talent-spotting; certainly an official of the Kirov School regularly goes round the dancing-clubs of the eight-year schools looking for likely candidates. Many of these institutions have survived, in one form or another, since Tsarist times, and have been retained and extended under the Soviet system because of the veneration for the arts in Russian tradition and communist theory alike.

The curriculum of these schools is devoted partly to general educational subjects, as in the ordinary schools, and the rest to the particular art involved. 'Work-training', as found in other schools, does not figure here; the artistic activity itself counts as 'labour' in the case of these specialists—nobody pretends that their contribution to the good of Soviet society is less than any number of engineers. Further, there is the practical consideration that for the future concert violinist or ballerina, working with lathe or welding-torch is unlikely to be beneficial, and may well be dangerous.

When Khrushchov issued his memorandum on 'Strengthening the ties of the school with life' in 1958, one of his proposals was to extend the system of special schools for the gifted to include scientists as well as artists. 'It may be found expedient,' he said, 'to pick from among capable pupils at the existing schools particularly gifted children showing, for instance, an aptitude for physics, mathematics, biology, draughtsmanship, etc., and collect them together at certain schools.'[10] This suggestion had a very mixed reception. For a couple of months the issue was debated, sometimes hotly, in the pages of *Pravda*, *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, and elsewhere.[11] The main line of attack was that such a step would be an undesirable departure from the comprehensive principle, and that it was unnecessary

anyway. The special art schools, long established and familiar as they were, were felt to be a special case, whereas separate treatment for the gifted in other fields was resisted as a form of streaming, even of segregation. In some quarters, too, there seemed to be a suspicion that the setting up of new categories of special schools might provide an easy open door for the children of influential parents. Whatever the reasons for the opposition, this particular proposal was quietly dropped when the law on educational reform was finally published.

Since then, however, special schools for *older* children exceptionally gifted in mathematics and physics have been making their appearance. A boarding school for such children was set up in Novosibirsk in 1963,[12] and there may well be more. The pupils are mostly the winners of the previous year's 'Olympiad' in mathematics and physics, which suggests that it is a 'middle school' only, not a complete special school of the 'arts' type. Current discussion in the Soviet Press on optional specialization in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh forms suggests that the authorities are trying to get the best of both worlds by combining comprehensive eight-year schooling with more selective treatment thereafter. Clearly, the question of special schooling for the able child is not settled yet, and will continue to crop up for some time to come.

Boarding Schools

One rapidly increasing type of school in the U.S.S.R. is the boarding school (*Shkola internat*). This was in existence before the recent reforms, having been called into being under a resolution of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party in 1956. Since then, the number of these schools has been growing fast, and is likely to grow faster in the near future; the authorities expect to have enough of them to admit two and a half million pupils by 1965.

The curriculum of the boarding schools is much the same as in day eight-year or eleven-year schools. There are some minor differences, due to the fact that the children spend the entire day there. All of them have supervised homework sessions, which result in the work being done in less time than by children living at home. Some find it possible to continue subjects like music and drawing all through the course; others set aside one day a week for excursions, making up the time for regular

studies during the rest of the week. For the most part, however, they do not significantly differ, in formal teaching or the qualifications they can provide, from their day-school counterparts.

These schools are not in any sense special schools for an élite, in spite of misleading analogies sometimes drawn with the English 'public' schools. Rather the reverse: there is a system of priorities for entry, which gives preference to orphans, the children of widows, unmarried mothers, invalids, children from large or overcrowded families, and so forth. There are cases, too, of temporary enrolments: one hears of children, admitted during their mother's absence in hospital, returning to the day schools on her recovery; or of children, originally enrolled because their homes were overcrowded, being withdrawn by their parents when they eventually got a new and bigger flat. Sometimes children are taken in from homes where the parents have difficulty in controlling them. On the whole, they tend to have a higher proportion of deprived or problem children than the day schools, so that the academic standards are often rather lower. Nevertheless, competition for entry is keen, especially in areas where the housing shortage is particularly acute.

Fees, adjusted according to the parents' ability to pay, are charged for the upkeep of the children. The authorities reckon that it costs them eighty roubles a month to keep a child in a boarding school; ideally, this cost is shared equally by the authorities and the parents. In practice, few pay anything approaching this maximum of forty roubles, since most of the children have been admitted in the first place on grounds of some kind of inadequacy in the home. At least twenty-five per cent, in fact, pay nothing at all, and have textbooks and materials provided free.

Children live in the school from Monday to Saturday, going home (if they have one) on Sundays and during school holidays. The authorities insist that the schools maintain as close links as possible with the children's homes, and pour scorn on the idea that they are trying to drive a wedge between the children and their parents. As in the day schools, Parents' Committees are active, and individual parents are encouraged to visit the school and discuss problems with the staff. Children are released to go home for family occasions, such as weddings or funerals; this

causes some inconvenience, it is said, but it is felt to be important to keep up the child's contact with his family. Organizers of boarding schools say that the family and the school help each other in the child's upbringing, and clearly feel that the family gains more from the exchange.

Discipline in the boarding schools is more strict than elsewhere. Many of the children have been unused to regular mealhours and bedtimes, adequate fresh air and exercise; to put this right, the school has to make regulations on such matters, and enforce them if persuasion is not enough. As in the day schools, the sexes are mixed, which is a further reason for supervision in the case of the older pupils.

There can be little doubt that the boarding school is popular with parents, if only for practical reasons; the constant flood of applications makes this clear enough. Many teachers, too, are convinced that it offers several practical advantages. It is usually possible to provide more extra-curricular activities than in the ordinary schools; it is easier to modify the timetable; there is nearly always more room and opportunity for sport; a boarding establishment offers more scope for 'socially useful labour' in kitchen, dormitories, and grounds, as well as classrooms. Most important of all, since the children live there all the time, the school can be more readily organized as a community, whose influence is more immediate, more continuous, less subject to interference than that of the day school. The boarding school, in short, is regarded by many Soviet teachers as more promising ground than the ordinary school for social and moral education in the widest sense.

Few, however, claim that the system is devoid of drawbacks. The children are together *all* the time, privacy is difficult or impossible, and living in the school atmosphere for twenty-four hours a day can become oppressive. Some teachers are little concerned about this, pointing out that for children from overcrowded homes privacy is an unknown luxury anyway, that children generally like to be with their own crowd, and that going home for weekends and holidays provides an adequate break from the school environment. Others are less sure; in Boarding School No. 15 in Moscow, for instance, deliberate steps are taken to vary the children's surroundings by getting them away from the school at regular and frequent intervals. Every Thursday, the elementary classes are taken, by teachers

or older pupils, to zoos, parks, museums, sports clubs, and on visits to other schools. Semi-official trips are also encouraged; some boys from the school went to the diving championships at Minsk last year, others who had made some money by spare-time work bought motor-cycles and went off on their own, touring the Ukraine and the Caucasus; even some of the smaller children have been on camping excursions in the forests. The boarding school may be a community in itself, but some directors are determined that it will not be a closed one. How general this attitude is cannot easily be determined; one gains the impression that boarding schools, being still in their infancy, are regarded by the authorities as still partly experimental, and that the directors are accordingly given more freedom of action than is normal in the school system at large.

Apart from teachers, doctors, and nurses, the boarding schools have on their staffs so-called 'upbringers'[13] (*vospitateli*) who act as helpers (rather like the auxiliaries recently proposed for English schools by the Minister of Education). These 'upbringers', lower paid than teachers and holding lesser qualifications, are supposed to attend to the physical and moral welfare of the children while the teachers, though concerned with this as well, concentrate more fully on the academic side. Their functions are not always clearly defined, but since teachers do not normally live in the school, the duties of the 'upbringers' are largely concerned with routine supervision of meals, clubs, dormitories, and so forth.

Physical conditions vary a good deal; on the whole, living accommodation appears to be adequate and clean but rather cramped. Some boarding schools were hastily converted from day schools shortly after the directive of 1956; these are usually the most crowded, as space was often lacking for the building of suitable extensions. Others are more spacious: Moscow No. 7 is a large five-storeyed building in a park, Moscow No. 15 has two buildings, one for normal school work and one for dormitories and dining-room, though here too the dormitories are crowded and storage space extremely limited. Building progress is obviously having difficulty in coping with demand.

A modified version of the boarding school is the 'prolonged day school' (*shkola prodlennogo dnya*), organized usually on an eight-year course. Pupils come to these schools in the morning for lessons and stay on for the afternoon and early evening, when

the time is occupied with club and Pioneer activities, homework supervision, organized walks and rambles, and the like. The children also eat there, returning home about seven o'clock after their evening meal. Such schools are expanding fast, and are proving even more popular; they offer working parents many of the practical advantages of boarding schools without going to the length of having the children living away from home.

When boarding schools were first introduced, there were many indications that the authorities intended to make them, eventually, the regular form of general education for all Soviet children. This may have been the intention, but it is less certain now; officials questioned on this point are reluctant to commit themselves beyond the next few years. The usual line taken is that the expansion of boarding and prolonged day schools will continue, but that a great deal remains to be learned about their effectiveness, and day schools will continue to exist alongside the newer types for the foreseeable future. As for suggestions that the place of the family is being undermined, they point to the elaborate efforts being made, in day and boarding schools alike, to secure the active cooperation of the parents in their children's education.

If this is indeed a change of policy, there are many possible reasons for it. For one thing, boarding schools, even with parental contributions, are a greater strain on the economy, and although government spending on education is high in the U.S.S.R., there are many more pressing claims on it. Further, high though the demand is at the moment, there is little evidence that the majority of parents would welcome the idea. Doubtless most of them could be persuaded or cajoled into acceptance, but we have seen that the authorities attach great value to the cooperation of parents with the school; loss of this, together with the economic cost, might well be too high a price to pay for any advantages gained by the system. Also there is the feeling in some quarters that boarding schools have not yet proved themselves as universally suitable; they have, after all, been functioning for only a few years under sometimes difficult conditions.

Predictions can be hazardous, especially when they are made about the Soviet Union, but it seems clear that we can expect a further growth of both boarding and prolonged day schools in the next few years. It is unlikely that they will replace the day

schools. As for suggestions that they might develop into special schools for the privileged, on the English pattern, this seems, on the basis of the present methods of selection for entry, even less likely.

Behind the Reforms

The change-over from the old system of ten-year and seven-year academic schools could hardly be described as a bombshell. Change had been in the air for some time; as far back as the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party in 1952 there had been some hints about the desirability of reviving the polytechnical ideal. Discussion mounted slowly from then onwards, until at the Twentieth Congress in 1956 Khrushchov criticized the schools for being 'divorced from life', and observed that 'those who finish school are insufficiently prepared for practical work'. This scheme was heard frequently and in more detail over the next two years, culminating in Khrushchov's memorandum of September 1958, entitled 'Strengthening the ties of the School with Life, and further developing the System of Public Education'. More discussion followed, but Khrushchov's criticisms and proposals, with some adjustments, formed the basis for the declaration of the Central Committee of the Party on the subject and finally, in December, for the law reforming the Soviet educational system.

The most significant changes were, first of all, a greater diversity of schools. Instead of making the ten-year school compulsory for all, the new system provides a wider range of choice after completion of the eight-year school. More important is the retreat from the overwhelmingly academic character of the old ten-year school, and the much greater emphasis on polytechnical and vocational training of all types. The actual changes in the *structure* of the school system were designed to make it a more effective vehicle for polytechnization; the stress on practical work for all is the keynote of the 1958 reforms. As far as can be seen, the reasons for this change were partly economic and practical, partly political and social.

Among the practical considerations were the shortage of manpower and the economic cost that would have resulted from universal ten-year schooling. Soviet economic planning has in

recent years been geared to large-scale defence and research expenditure, a high rate of industrial expansion, and a substantial increase in housing and the production of consumer goods; the present leadership has virtually staked its future on its ability to raise the standard of living. For this policy to have any hope of success, a highly skilled labour force is essential, but this is difficult. The ravages of war are still making their effect felt in the form of a drastically lowered birth rate (together with the loss of children in the occupied areas) during the war years,[14] which is now seriously reducing the numbers available for the various branches of industrial production. Keeping all young people in school full-time till the age of seventeen would have aggravated this problem; the new measures may then be an attempt to meet the needs of industry and extend secondary education at the same time. Further, the burden on the national budget may have been a consideration; by combining most forms of middle schooling with productive labour the educational system at least helps to pay for itself.

It had also been felt for some time that the ten-year schools, successful in their own way though they were, had become too narrowly specialized in their function. As Khrushchov put it:

> We are striving to have our entire youth, millions of boys and girls, go through the ten-year secondary school. Naturally enough, they cannot all be absorbed by the colleges. . . . In recent years, in view of the growing numbers passing out of the ten-year schools, a smaller proportion of boys and girls enter college. The greater part of them . . . turn out to be quite unprepared for life and do not know in which direction to turn . . . Owing to the fact that the secondary school curriculum is divorced from life, these boys and girls have absolutely no knowledge of production, and society does not know how best to utilize these young and vigorous people . . . This state of affairs can hardly be considered right.[15]

In short, the ten-year schools were trying to give to all an education specially suited to the needs of a minority. They were succeeding, it appears, only too well; every year, thousands of young people worked hard at school with their eyes on a university place, only to find that for most of them the places were not forthcoming. Their courses, by fitting them specially for academic work, had unfitted them for anything else. The result was widespread frustration, increased string-pulling by the influential, more cramming in the schools, and a rise in the delinquency figures.

The new system, with its stress on work-training for all, seeks to avoid this by providing an alternative qualification, by playing up the virtues of work and making industrial labour more palatable, and at the same time building up a better-trained labour force. This, in the circumstances, was only common sense. What passes for 'general education' is usually in fact as vocational a course as any, designed for those whose work will involve academic rather than technical know-how. To educate all children, or even a sizeable proportion of them, according to the vocational needs of the small fraction who will go on to higher education is asking for trouble, as we are finding out in this country as well. One alternative might have been to introduce a highly selective system, perhaps on the German model, whereby children are selected early for different kinds of secondary school, one of which caters for the few going on to further academic study. Such a solution, however, would have run completely counter to Soviet educational ideals of egalitarianism and comprehensive schooling. The combination of academic and industrial training for all was probably the only way out of the difficulty, and had the further advantage of redefining 'general education' as the education of the citizen and worker, not just the scholar.

But the reforms attempt rather more. There has been ample evidence since the war that a 'new class' or 'technocracy' has been emerging in the Soviet Union. In spite of periodic attacks on nepotism and 'incorrect social attitudes', most parents in 'white-collar' jobs have done their best to keep their children clear of manual work by pushing them through the schools in the direction of college diplomas and white collars of their own, the whiter the better. Nor has this been confined to the growing élite; many working parents have similar ambitions for their own children, and exert pressure on them to work hard in school to lift themselves up the social ladder by winning qualifications for some kind of intellectual, or at least non-manual, work. This, of course, is a familiar enough phenomenon in our own country, where the maintaining or improving of social position seems to be the strongest driving-force among parents and pupils alike, for all the lip-service paid to broader educational aims. Many in Britain condemn this 'rat-race' on a variety of grounds, feeling that we have our values wrong when so much effort is spent scaling the rungs of social prestige. In the U.S.S.R. the

objection is more serious; the ladder is not supposed to exist at all, and social climbing is seen as a barrier to the building of a classless society, one of the fundamental aims of communist theory. Khrushchov had a good deal to say about this too:

> We still have a sharp distinction drawn between mental and manual work. . . . This is fundamentally wrong and runs counter to our teaching and aspirations. As a rule, boys and girls who have finished secondary school consider that the only acceptable path in life for them is to continue their education at higher schools. . . . Some of them even consider [work] beneath their dignity. This scornful and lordly attitude is to be found also in some families. If a boy or girl does not study well . . . the parents . . . frighten him by saying that if he fails to get into college he will have to work in a factory as a common labourer. Physical work becomes a thing to frighten children with. . . . Such views are an insult to the working people of socialist society.
>
> Such an incorrect situation . . . can no longer be tolerated. In a socialist society work must be valued by its usefulness, must be stimulated not only by its remuneration, but also by the high respect of our Soviet public. It must be constantly inculcated in the young people that . . . work is a vital necessity for every Soviet person.'[16]

The basic motive behind the new reforms, then, would seem to be an ideological one. As well as oiling the wheels of Soviet society by removing some causes of frustration among school-leavers and training the much-needed manpower for the national economy, the new system is an attempt to teach the dignity of labour, reinforce Marxist ethics among young people, to break down the barriers between mental and manual work, and call a halt to the growth of the 'white-collar' mentality and the emergence of a new upper class. From this point of view, Khrushchov was using an educational reform as a tool for an ambitious piece of social engineering. Whether this policy can succeed, or whether Soviet society will go on stratifying in spite of it, yet remains to be seen.

Since the setting up of the new system in 1958, there have been some further changes. In the summer of 1964, the secondary polytechnical course was reduced from three to two years, thus making the full course ten years once more.[17] This reduction, it was emphasized,[18] was not to bring about any lowering in academic standards; time was to be saved by some pruning of subject-matter and by eliminating superfluous and repetitive material. This begins in the fourth form of the eight-year school, so that in effect eleven years' work is being compressed into ten,

rather than three years' work into two. In particular, there are substantial cuts in the time for work training and allied activities; there are small reductions in the eight-year school, but in the secondary polytechnic, production practice now occupies a quarter of the total time, not a third as previously. Part-time schools are not affected.

The schools are, therefore, in a transitional state once again. The change-over has begun, and the present intention is to complete it by 1966. The plans,[19] however, are provisional, to be revised in the light of experience, and it is possible that the three-year and two-year systems may co-exist for longer than that. Khrushchov was still in power when these latest decisions were made, and it is therefore unlikely that they represent a retreat from his position—hence the emphasis on the continuing central importance of polytechnical education, in spite of the reduction of the time allowed for it in the curriculum. The reasons for the change can only be guessed at, and there are doubtless several factors operating at once; but it is probable that the authorities felt the extra eleventh year an undue strain on their resources, and that much of the time spent on production training was neither economically nor educationally profitable. The reasons for the changes, and their effects, should emerge over the next year or two, but as yet they are too recent for any final judgement to be made.

Teaching Methods

Like virtually everything else in Soviet education, classroom organization and teaching methods are laid down in detail by the central authorities. Curricula are, as we have seen, almost uniform throughout the country; not only does the Soviet teacher have to work to a prescribed scheme, but he has to get through a stipulated amount of subject-matter every term, month, and week, and must conform to the approved method of putting it across to his pupils. 'Correct' teaching techniques are therefore taught in the teacher training institutions, and are enforced in the school by ministerial regulation, by the school director (who is expected to hear the teaching of every member of his staff regularly), and by inspectors from the Departments of Education. This situation, which is more or less what would be expected in the U.S.S.R., and is common enough in many

Continental countries, leaves most British and American observers aghast at its rigidity.

The prescribed techniques are, for all the current insistence on the necessity of keeping up with the times, formal and old-fashioned in the extreme. Whatever other new developments have transformed Soviet education, teaching method has remained largely unaffected. In the heady atmosphere of experiment in the years after the revolution, the schools tried every 'progressive' technique available, including many importations from the West, such as the Dalton Plan, whereby pupils worked on individual assignments geared to their own pace, or activity methods such as the 'project' inspired by John Dewey; but all this came to an end in the 1930s, when the Stalin régime reintroduced the formal schooling of pre-revolutionary times. The death of Stalin set in motion many changes in various fields of Soviet life, but the classroom was not one of them. Standard Soviet practice still bears a close resemblance to that of the most conventional and traditionalist teachers in this country.

Basically, the typical lesson is a one-way process; the job of the teacher is to tell the pupils, theirs is to accept and absorb. Lesson techniques are therefore closely akin to lecturing, with questioning of the class to make sure that the prescribed material is going home. Learning by doing has little place—the role of the children is passive.

The teacher usually begins the lesson by examining the children's homework. This consists largely of the recitation of memorized passages or the answering of the teacher's questions by selected pupils, who stand out at the blackboard to say their piece or perform the task required. On average, this kind of thing takes up to twenty per cent of the time. Pupils are given marks for their performances, ranging from five at the top to one at the bottom of the scale; all of them are supposed to be examined thus at regular intervals, and the resultant marks accompany them all the way through the school. This stage of the lesson can be used as a general review of the subject-matter to date, so that the children can all have a clear picture of what has been covered so far.

The next stage is the introduction of new material. Most of this is straight lecturing by the teacher; the children sit and listen attentively while it is explained to them. When he has finished his exposition of the day's lesson, the teacher then

questions members of the class to see if they have understood, and any child in difficulties can take this chance of asking for further explanation. Finally, the children are given their next homework assignment—some pages of the textbook to learn, or written work—and the teacher summarizes the day's lesson, integrating what is new with what has gone before. Each lesson is thus meant to be a well-defined unit, comprising revision and testing of old material, introduction and elaboration of the new, questioning to see if the point has been grasped, and the setting of homework to reinforce. In practice, it is not always as rigid as this, but such a framework, and the necessity of getting through a set amount of work with a class of mixed ability, leaves little room for spontaneity, activity, or discussion.

The atmosphere of the lesson is as formal as its structure. The children are arranged in rows of desks facing the teacher, in the traditional manner. In accordance with the nationwide 'Rules for Pupils' (see pp. 47–8), they rise when he enters or leaves the room, stand to attention when answering or asking questions or reciting homework, sit up straight with arms folded when listening to the lesson, hold up their hands for permission to speak, sit down only by permission, and so forth. The teacher is in absolute control throughout, the children being forbidden by the rules to speak or do anything except with his direction or consent.

In spite of the formidable-sounding nature of the rules of behaviour and the conduct of lessons, there tends to be a good deal of variety in their application. There are teachers who stick to the prescribed pattern with minute, mechanical precision, and insist on a completely literal interpretation of the rules, reprimanding children (at some length) for holding up their hands in the wrong way, making much of the importance of the proper method of folding the arms, and so on, with all the understanding and imagination of a regular drill-sergeant. On the other hand, many teachers, though keeping within the regulation framework, are more liberal in their approach; formality is tempered by friendliness. It is quite usual for lessons to be run in the prescribed manner without any feeling of parade-ground tension. Children are still expected to stand when addressing the teacher, but not in an automatic jack-in-the-box manner, while the teacher, though still firmly in charge of the class, is careful to show the children the same

courtesy he expects of them, using such phrases as 'Please', 'Thank you', and so forth to modify the bare command. Teacher–pupil relations seem, on the whole, to be unstrained but orderly. Children do not address the teachers by any formal titles, but use the first name and patronymic;[20] teachers use the children's first names alone. (Incidentally, the existence in Russian of familiar and polite forms of 'you' introduces a complication shared by other European languages but mercifully absent in English. Children in the earlier forms are called by the familiar *ty* (French *tu*), but the polite *vy* (*vous*) is used with the older ones. The Soviet classroom may be rigidly organized by some Western standards (this at any rate is the reaction of most Americans and some Englishmen, though to a Scot the régime is far from unfamiliar); but it is not quite as soulless and mechanical as a reading of the regulations might suggest.

At present there is some movement away from the prevailing verbal formality of lessons. Some teachers, and some administrators too, are coming to feel that there is something in the idea that the child learns better what he does than what he hears, and that 'chalk and talk' is a teaching device of limited efficiency. There has been an increase in experiments on teaching method in the Pedagogic Institutes and the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences; teachers are being called upon to make better use of visual aids, which tend at the moment to be limited and unimaginative. Partly as a result of the increased emphasis on polytechnical training, the importance of practical experiment in the scientific subjects is now being more fully recognized. In foreign language teaching, the stress is being shifted from formal grammatical analysis to conversational practice with a view to mastery of the spoken idiom, and language classes are now supposed to consist of groups of about ten pupils each, not thirty or over as previously. These steps in the direction of greater pupil participation are, however, slight and hesitant as yet. Traditional attitudes, even in the U.S.S.R., die hard, and many of the older teachers are displaying great reluctance to change their ways, often resisting with surprising stubbornness attempts to make them switch over to more modern methods. Attitudes to teaching technique may be under scrutiny, but the wind of change blowing through the Soviet classrooms is little more than a breeze at the moment, and is likely to remain so for some time yet. Further, there is little sign

that more variety of method will be introduced, at least officially; whether or not teaching becomes more 'progressive', it is likely to be as uniformly enforced as it is now.

There are both advantages and drawbacks in the present system. The formality of lessons tends to be constricting, acting as a straitjacket for the more imaginative teacher. There is little room for discussion, spontaneous inquiry, or for the useful device of letting a digression go its own way. It can frustrate the imaginative teacher and mislead the unimaginative into an obsession with unimportant detail and a preoccupation with outward form. Change is not impossible, of course; a teacher who feels he has a good idea for a certain kind of lesson can always refer it to a Pedagogic Institute or some similar body for research, and it may well be eventually embodied in standard practice. But he is not free to try it out on his own class on his own initiative, and official channels are liable to become silted up. Also, what might prove a good method for one man or one class may not be a good general rule for teaching, a point not yet appreciated by educational officials.

But it is unlikely that the run-of-the-mill teacher sees things in this light. Most teachers in most countries rely heavily on copying normal practice for the basis of their own teaching. Where they are left free to decide on their own methods, many either follow closely in their senior colleagues' ways, or flounder helplessly in the absence of any clear indication of what they should do; where methods are prescribed, as in the Soviet schools, they can use as a prop what others regard as a hindrance. It should be remembered, too, that there are still many Soviet teachers whose training has been limited to secondary pedagogic schools (see pp. 132–3). The system has at least the merit of making reasonably competent teachers out of people who would not achieve anything like their present successes if left to their own devices.

The rigid control of Soviet teaching methods, then, combines security for the mediocre or shaky teacher with irksome restriction for the more lively and adventurous; and as long as emphasis has to be placed on expansion and output this is likely to remain so. As for the still prevalent formality of the typical lesson, this carries the usual dangers of stereotyped instruction, boredom, and an artificiality that makes 'bringing the schools closer to life' all the more difficult. It is just as well

that the lack of liveliness inherent in such techniques is countered to some extent by the widespread national reverence for education, and the individual child's eagerness to learn.

1. Unlike the G.C.E., however, the 'Certificate of Maturity' had no differentiation of grades corresponding to the Ordinary and Advanced levels, nor was there any selection of subjects. Pupils took *all* their subjects to the same level; the German *Abitur* examination would be a closer parallel. This situation has not been substantially altered by the changes of 1958.

2. Before the war, official policy was to make ten-year schooling compulsory for all by 1960. Apart from other considerations, the effects of the war made this quite impossible.

3. The five-year courses were exceptional; most of the vocational schools offered courses of two years and under.

4. The official exchange rate of 2.50 roubles to the pound is artificial. Most economists reckon that in actual purchasing power the rouble is worth about five shillings. This would make the fees between £2 10s. and 12s. 6d., according to the parents' incomes. Maximum and minimum figures differ from one city or region to another.

To put the actual sums in perspective, it should be noted that the average industrial wage is about 125–150 roubles a month (see p. 147).

5. There were in 1963 503 such 'language schools' in the U.S.S.R. According to the Soviet Information Service, 700 more are to be opened by 1965. Most will still teach in English, French, or German, but Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, and Urdu schools will also be set up.

6. The current syllabus in physical education also makes some provision for more choice and flexibility after the fifth form, but the basic programme is detailed throughout, stipulating not only the skills to be taught, but the methods to be used and the standards acceptable for children of any given age. The syllabus for this subject in the eight-year school (*Programmy vosmiletnei shkoly: Fizicheskaya kultura.* Uchpedgiz, Moscow, 1960) is a hundred pages in length. This is typical of the amount of detailed prescription in all school subjects.

7. It is becoming increasingly common for the more ambitious parents in many of the non-Russian areas to opt to send their children to Russian-language schools, where considerably less time is spent on the local vernacular than in the native-language schools; the better knowledge of Russian thus obtained will improve their chances of entering higher education elsewhere in the U.S.S.R. Moves to make Russian or the minority languages optional instead of compulsory gave rise to considerable controversy, and are interpreted by some observers as an attempt to strengthen Russian at the expense of the other languages. This is the view taken by Yaroslav Belinsky in 'The Soviet Educational Laws of 1958–9 and Soviet Nationality Policy', *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, October 1962.

8. A new style of school uniform, much more 'civilian' in appearance, was approved by the Ministry of Education of the R.S.F.S.R. in January 1963. The button-up tunic has been replaced by an ordinary jacket.

9. The position with regard to music schools is rather more complicated. There are thirteen music *desyatiletki* (ten-year schools) in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa, Tbilisi, Kharkov, Riga, Baku, Yerevan, Tashkent, Alma-Ata, Gorky, and Minsk. These schools are highly selective, and are affiliated to music conservatories, which ninety per cent of their pupils enter. There is also a much more widespread two-tier system: over 1,200 music *semiletki* (seven-year schools), from which pupils can go on to the appropriate *uchilishcha* (secondary schools). These offer a four-year course, which includes musical and educational theory. From there, students can either proceed to a conservatory or go into teaching.

10. 'Strengthening the ties of the schools with life and further developing the system of public education.' Text of the memorandum by N. S. Khrushchov, approved by the praesidium of the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in September 1958, p. 10. (Published in English as *Proposals to Reform Soviet Education*, Soviet Booklet No. 42, October 1958.)

11. For: Academician N. N. Semyonov, *Pravda*, 17 October 1958; I. Zeldovich and A. Sakharov, *Pravda*, 19 November 1958; V. Kuroyedov, *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, 9 October 1958, etc.

Against: Academician M. Lavrentiev, *Pravda*, 25 November 1958; I. Eichfeld, *Pravda*, 22 December 1958; P. Litvinenko, *Pravda*, 13 December 1958, etc.

Some of the principal arguments are paraphrased in Bereday, Brickman, and Read, *The Changing Soviet School*, pp. 374–8.

12. *The Times Educational Supplement*, 15 March 1963.

13. Admittedly, 'upbringers' is a clumsy term for *vospitateli*, but it is the most accurate translation. Some American writers call them 'educators', but this invites confusion with ordinary teachers. The Scots term 'wean-herd' is neat, but is unfortunately not easily rendered into Southern English.

14. The population in 1941 was about 200 millions, in 1945 between 170 and 175 millions. The loss in the birth rate must have been about 10 millions—a total loss of 35 to 40 millions. We are now beset by the problems of a post-war population 'bulge', the U.S.S.R. by a massive 'dent' in the generation now in its prime.

15. N. S. Khrushchov, op. cit., p. 4.

16. N. S. Khrushchov, op. cit., p. 5.

17. 'Ob izmenenii sroka obucheniya v srednikh obshcheobrazovatelnykh trudovykh politekhnicheskikh shkol s proizvodstvennym obucheniem.' (*Sovietskaya Rossiya*, 13 August 1964.)

18. *Konsultatsiya Ministerstva prosveshcheniya RSFSR* (*Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, 15 August 1964).

19. *ibid.*, 15 and 20 August 1964.

20. There is no English equivalent. By this form of address, Irina Ivanovna Strakhova will be called 'Irina Ivanovna', which is more formal than 'Irina' but less so that 'Tovarishch Strakhova'. The Russian equivalents of 'Sir', etc., are no longer used.

5 Higher Education

The Growth of Higher Education

Of all the advances in the educational field since the revolution, few have provided more cause for pride on the part of the Soviet authorities and anxiety for some Western observers than the spread of higher education in the universities and other institutions. The figures of growth are certainly eloquent: in 1914 there were 105 institutions, including eight universities, most of them concentrated in the major cities of European Russia; by 1959 there were 766 institutions, forty of them universities, spread over the entire country. There were 127,400 students of all kinds in 1914, 2,150,000 in 1959; 10,700 graduated in 1914, 342,200 in 1959. The numbers of men and women in higher education are roughly equal. The numbers continue to rise,[1] and although the speed of growth has slackened somewhat in the last few years, there are now nearly three million students. In the early days of the Soviet régime, the problem was to find enough trained graduates for the public need; now it is to find some way of coping with the rising tide of would-be entrants for whom the institutions have no places—one of the considerations, as we have seen, behind the 1958 reforms.

Not only has there been a spectacular rise in the number of higher educational places, but their distribution among the various peoples of the U.S.S.R. has been made more equable. Tadzhikistan, for example, which before 1917 had no facilities for higher education and few for any other kind, now has thirty-three special and technical schools, eight institutions of higher education, and an Academy of Sciences. In 1917 the more backward areas generally (Siberia, Central Asia, the Far East) had four institutions; now, with over 200, they account for about a

quarter of the country's output of graduates. In some of the Union Republics, such as Georgia, Armenia, and Uzbekistan, it is possible to take a full higher educational course in the native language. This is not the case everywhere, however, and there are signs that in many areas Russian is expanding at the expense of the local tongue, especially where the minorities are small, the local cultures less firmly rooted, and the proportion of Russian-speaking settlers high.

A large proportion of Soviet students consists of working people who study in their spare time. For what can still be considered a poor country, compared with the U.S.A. or Western Europe, the financial burden of higher education on the national economy is immense. It is partly for this reason that the expansion of university and college places has been soft-pedalled recently, and various devices have been sought to reduce the expense. One method has been to save on the standard of students' hostel accommodation, which makes it possible for the Soviet authorities to consider the very ordinary students' rooms in Moscow University as something of a showpiece. Another way has been to encourage various forms of part-time education, and looking to this type of course as the most feasible area for expansion in the future. Full-time day students account for just over half the total number (fifty-five per cent in 1959), the rest being made up of evening and 'shift' students[2] (seven per cent) and correspondence students (thirty-eight per cent). The proportion of part-time students will increase, since this system is not only financially convenient in saving on the expense of premises, but is now held to be ideologically desirable, as one means of fighting academic exclusiveness by keeping as many students as possible close to the realities of working life. More important still, the fact that part-time students stay at their jobs helps the national economy by ensuring that the expansion of higher education does not mean too great a drain on a labour force already seriously reduced by the losses of the Second World War. Correspondence students are not, however, left to their own devices till they sit their examinations; they are expected to visit the institution to which they are attached for periodic consultation with tutors, short courses of lectures and seminars, leave from work being readily granted for the purpose.[3] In this way it has been possible to reduce the casualty rate of students who find the pressure of work too much and

give up before completing their courses. The success rate is higher than it used to be, but the courses for part-time students are still a very heavy burden on top of their normal work, and often take longer as a result. Nevertheless, such a system does help to raise the number of graduates available, and provides opportunities for higher education for many individuals who, in an entirely full-time system, would almost certainly have had to do without.

The Aims of Higher Education

Institutions of higher education, like every other branch of the system, are organized with the social, political, and economic needs of Soviet society continually in mind. The objectives of higher education, as well as its structure and organization, are defined by law in the 'Statute on the Higher Schools of the U.S.S.R.', approved by the Council of Ministers in 1961. This law lays down the aims of the universities and colleges as follows:

1. To train highly qualified specialists educated in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, well versed in both the latest achievements of science and technology, at home and abroad, and in the practical aspects of production, capable of utilizing modern technology to the utmost and of creating the technology of the future.
2. To carry out research that will contribute to the solution of the problems of building communism.
3. To produce textbooks and study aids of a high standard.
4. To train teachers and research workers.
5. To provide advanced training for specialists with higher education working in various fields of the national economy, the arts, education, and the health services.
6. To disseminate scientific and political knowledge among the people.
7. To study the problems connected with the utilization of graduates and with improving the quality of their training.[4]

Much of this sounds more like rhetoric than a programme for action, but statements of this kind serve to show that the authorities do not regard the functions of higher educational establishments as limited to teaching. The emphasis on research is new, as is the stress on the importance of close cooperation with the various branches of the national economy. It is held to be essential to maintain this close relationship; a great deal of

current scientific and industrial research is carried on as a joint enterprise under the aegis of industrial managements and higher educational bodies. Although most institutes come under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education, some of the more specialized are run by other ministries, notably those of Health and Culture, and closely integrated with their general plans for development and research. The role of higher education as a producer of knowledge as well as a teaching process is given more attention as time goes on.

The expected stress on political work, training specialists 'educated in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism', and spreading 'scientific and political knowledge among the people', shows how far the authorities regard graduates as a vanguard in the construction of the new society. It is their job not only to exercise their specialist skills, but also to understand, accept, and propagate the political ideas of the régime, so that they can act as leaders in the various tasks required by the needs of developing Soviet society, as interpreted by the Communist Party. This results in much attention being given to the student's 'social' as well as academic record—he is expected to spend some of his holiday and spare time on voluntary work for the community, such as helping to build the underground railway in Leningrad, or helping with the harvest in near-by agricultural areas. This emphasis on the student's political role also results in the lengthy and detailed (and compulsory) courses in Marxist-Leninist political theory for all students, regardless of their speciality or future job.

The Structure of Higher Education

Soviet institutions of higher education, like the courses offered in them, are on the whole more specialized than their British counterparts. A course in geology, electrical engineering, or industrial chemistry is usually more limited than would be the case here. Only in the universities is there anything approaching a liberal arts course, but even there the range of studies is narrower, if sometimes deeper; there is no equivalent to a Scottish Ordinary or English General Degree, nor do they start on a wide general course, and specialize later, as some of our universities do. Students have to choose their field of study when they

apply for admission to an institution. Changes, of course, are possible, but infrequent, as this means taking longer to qualify; as courses last for four to five years, few students feel inclined to take longer than they can help.

The institutions themselves are more specialized than ours, a clear division normally being drawn between the humanities and pure sciences on the one hand, which are taught at the universities, and practical and applied studies on the other, which are taught at institutes of other types. Many disciplines which we are accustomed to dealing with in university faculties, such as law, medicine, engineering, agriculture, and the like, are studied in separate establishments[5] such as Law Colleges and Medical Institutes. In theory at least the universities and other colleges reach the same standard and enjoy the same status and esteem; in practice, perhaps inevitably, there are some inequalities between the universities and the rest in terms of prestige at least, partly because of their broader curriculum and partly because of the traditional respect for the universities, which dates from pre-revolutionary days. There is, however, no clear-cut official differentiation of status, such as exists in some other countries; some institutes, in fact, such as the Kalinin Polytechnical Institute in Leningrad, enjoy a much higher esteem than many of the universities. All institutions, university and other, have the power of conferring diplomas, conducting research, and awarding post-graduate degrees. The word VUZ (*Vysshee Uchebnoe Zavedenie*, Higher Educational Institution) is popularly used to refer to all types.

In accordance both with the needs of the national economy and the importance laid by Marxism on the unity of theory and practice, the weight of numbers is strongly in favour of the practical and applied studies. Soviet sources[6] gave the proportion of students at technical colleges as 39·4 per cent of the whole, while agricultural and medical colleges account for 10·8 and 8·5 respectively. The remaining 41·3 per cent are classified under the 'humanities'. This is a little misleading, however, as this term is used to include all university students, science and arts alike, together with those in colleges of art, music, law, economics, and teacher training institutes. The main types of VUZ are as follows:

Universities

There are forty universities in the U.S.S.R., at least one in each constituent republic, with a total of 250,000 students. A few, like those of Moscow and Leningrad, have a long history by Russian standards, stretching back into the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries respectively. Others, like the University of Novosibirsk, are products of the last few years. They vary greatly in size and amenities; Moscow University has over 25,000 students and a staff of 2,000, compared with total enrolments of a thousand or less in some of the new foundations; its science faculties are housed in a massive thirty-two storey building on the Lenin Hills, containing, among other things, 148 lecture halls, over 1,000 laboratories, 6,000 living-rooms, lounges, workrooms, and a library with over 5,000,000 titles. The building was completed in 1953. Leningrad University's premises, by way of contrast, are old and even seedy; new buildings are being planned, a move welcomed by a staff hard-pressed for space. (Some students and teachers, however, have a sentimental regard for the old buildings. One student remarked that he preferred them to the heavy vulgarity of the Moscow skyscraper, which he described as 'new, without being modern'.) Moscow is certainly untypical in many ways; Soviet universities have much the same range as British ones in size, facilities, and state of repair, if not in age.

Broadly, their function is to provide facilities for study and research in the pure sciences and the humanities. The range of available subjects varies a good deal from place to place, but most of them have faculties of physical sciences, mathematics, biology, chemistry, geology, geography, history, philology, and similar familiar disciplines. Some of them have faculties or departments for studies more commonly catered for in separate institutes. There are departments of law, for example, in the Universities of Moscow, Leningrad, Yerevan, and Tbilisi; of economics in Moscow, Leningrad, Kazakhstan, and Tomsk; of journalism in Moscow, Lvov, and Azerbaidzhan, and elsewhere. The major Universities of Moscow and Leningrad are, as can be seen, particularly versatile, and include departments of art history and oriental studies which most other universities do not possess. Departments of philology deal not only with literature and linguistics, but offer courses in a wide range of languages; no less then seventy Soviet and foreign languages

are taught somewhere in the U.S.S.R., from Russian, English, and German to Kazakh, Greek, and Vietnamese.

For the most part university students are trained with a view to employment as scientists, scholars, linguists, historians, and the like. Many of them, however, go into teaching, either at academic or school level. In order to keep a pool of potential teachers ready to hand, the authorities require most university students to take courses in psychology, educational theory, and teaching methods, and to do a certain amount of teaching practice. (This does not, of course, apply to students whose courses commit them to other professions, such as law.) In this way extra specialist teachers can be recruited when other sources prove insufficient.

Technical Institutes

There are 204 of these, with over 840,000 students. They are of two kinds: *polytechnical institutes*, such as those of Leningrad, Kharkov, Kaunas, and the Urals, have between seven and fifteen faculties, offering courses in a variety of technological subjects such as metallurgy, chemical technology, electrical engineering, precision mechanics, and a host of others. *Branch technical institutes* are more specialized; each one is normally restricted to one particular industry, such as the Mining Institute at Dnepropetrovsk or the Civil Engineering Institute at Novosibirsk. The combination of practical work experience and theoretical knowledge is particularly stressed at technical institutes of both types, several continuous periods of work in factories and workshops forming an essential part of the course.

Agricultural Institutes

These colleges are very similar to the technical institutes in principle and function, turning out specialists in various branches of agriculture, such as agronomy, pomology, and gardening, soil chemistry, animal husbandry, veterinary medicine, agricultural economics, the mechanization of agriculture, and so forth. Theoretical studies are combined with periods of practical work on experimental plots and the collective and state farms. While the impact of higher education on agriculture has been noticeably less than on industry, it seems that the fault lies with the organization of farms and farm policy rather than with the colleges or their graduates. Most of the recent com-

plaints have been directed at the misuse of specialists rather than their quality, though some have been taken to task for being too academic in their approach—or, as Khrushchov put it, 'They cannot tell young hemp from nettles until they have been stung by the nettles.' This kind of criticism has been common lately in many fields of education, hence the increased stress on the need for practical experience. There are ninety-nine agricultural institutes in the U.S.S.R., with 247,000 students.

Medical Institutes

Soviet doctors are trained in the country's eighty medical institutes, with an enrolment of 166,900 students. These colleges also provide six-year courses for specialists in such fields as internal medicine, pediatrics, sanitation, stomatology, pharmaceutics, etc., and offer refresher courses in which graduates can keep abreast of the latest developments in their own fields. At the present time, three-quarters of practising doctors are women, partly because of the special conditions created by the civil war, the rush to industrialize in the 1920s and 1930s, and the Second World War. The balance is changing, however, and the majority of Soviet medical students are now men.

In addition to doctors and nurses, Soviet medicine recognizes a second-grade medical practitioner, known as a *feldsher*, somewhere between the two professions in depth of knowledge and extent of responsibility. They are not trained at the medical institutes, however, which provide courses for doctors only; *feldshera*, like nurses, receive their training at the appropriate specialized secondary schools or *tekhnikums*.

Pedagogic Institutes

These are concerned with the training of teachers and will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Institutes of Economics

Thirty specialist colleges train the large number of economists needed for the planning and management of the elaborate machinery of the Soviet industrial and agricultural system. Here again, the tendency is to specialize in some particular field —political economy, transport and production accounting, the economics of industry, transport and agriculture, finance, and

so forth. Fourteen universities and sixty-one agricultural and technical institutes also train economists, the universities being more concerned with theory and the other establishments with its practical application to their own field. The subject is, of course, presented from the Marxist point of view, but other economic theorists, such as John Maynard Keynes, are introduced in the syllabus so that they can be proved wrong.

Law Institutes

There are over 36,000 law students in the U.S.S.R. Their studies include a broad common course of legal subjects ranging from Theory of Law and State and Roman Law to Accounting and Forensic Medicine, together with a choice of three special fields: State and Administrative Law (including fundamentals of national economic planning, history of the Soviet state and law, administration, etc.); Criminal Law (including criminology, criminal action, appeals, court organization); and Civil Law, including land, collective-farm, labour, patent, planning, and contract law, etc. Courses in these various branches are provided at the special law institutes, and also in the law faculties and departments of some universities. Here too theoretical learning is combined with practical training, which takes the form of work in government offices and selected branches of the legal service, the nearest equivalent to the kind of legal apprenticeship known in this country.

Arts Institutes

This category covers a variety of establishments, most of which concentrate on one aspect of the fine or applied arts. It includes twenty-two music conservatories, twelve institutes of drama and scenic design, academies and institutes of the visual and plastic arts, as well as institutes of decorative and applied arts, industrial art schools, a literary institute, an architectural institute, and a college of cinematography. Entry to these is in theory open to all comers who can satisfy the entrance requirements, but in practice those who have been to the special schools for the gifted in the arts get the bulk of the places in most of them, especially in the music conservatories. Courses are a combination of practical work and study of theory, but here the emphasis is overwhelmingly on the production of competent practitioners in the visual arts, music, drama, and the like. A

number of universities provide courses for those more interested in the theoretical or historical side.

Institutes of Physical Culture

There are eighteen of these, with an enrolment of 14,000. Their function is to train instructors in physical education, gymnastics, and sport.

Admission and Maintenance of Students

Competition for entry to Soviet higher education is keen, even fierce. All Soviet citizens under the age of thirty-five who have successfully completed a full secondary-school course and obtained the 'Certificate of Maturity' (*Attestat zrelosti*) are eligible to apply for admission, but in practice there is room in the institutions for only a fraction of these. The proportion of applicants accepted varies from place to place, ranging from one in three to one in eight. In some extreme cases the pressure is even greater: the Leningrad Mechanics and Optics Institute, for example, admitted only one applicant in thirty in 1958. In recent years, the number of available places has risen somewhat, while the number of aspiring entrants has rocketed. For this reason, the automatic admission of gold medallists from the secondary schools has been dropped; entry is now determined by the would-be student's performance in competitive examination, and by his place on the list of priorities.

The exact form of the entry examination depends on the faculty or speciality that the student has in mind. Russian language and literature, foreign language, and the language of the republic (in the case of non-Russian institutions) are general requirements. In addition, students must satisfy the examiners of their competence in their proposed fields of study—physics, chemistry, and mathematics for intending scientists and engineers, history and geography for intending lawyers and students of the humanities, and art and music for those trying to enter the art academies and music conservatories, and so forth. This requirement is intended to put a stop to the growing practice whereby some students entered courses not because of interest but simply because they were easier to get into; many of them would switch over to their real interest when a place became available. This was condemned on a number of grounds,

such as waste of time, parasitism, and so forth, and because more genuine applicants were kept out.

The examinations are partly written, partly oral, and are assessed on the usual five-point scale, from five (excellent) to one (poor), thus making a total possible score of twenty-five. Normally a total of twenty-three is needed, though 'mature' students—ex-servicemen and ex-workers—may be let in with twenty-one. This procedure is uniform throughout the country, but the actual standard is not, since each institution is largely responsible for running its own examinations, with some supervision from the Ministry. Accordingly, there are some discrepancies in standards: they are higher for polytechnical institutes than for agricultural colleges, for example, and higher for universities than for pedagogic institutes, in spite of the theoretical equality of status. Even among institutes of the same kind there are some variations; university entrance is difficult everywhere, but much more so in Moscow or Leningrad than in Alma-Ata or Dushanbey. This results in some heart-burning among unsuccessful applicants who have miscalculated their chances. As one disappointed youth put it, 'I wasn't clever enough to get into Leningrad, just enough to make it seem worth trying. That's what makes it so hard.'

There are other considerations too. Preference is given, other things being equal, to students who can produce a reference (*kharakteristika*) from Party or Komsomol organizations, trade unions, or their factory managers, and to those who have served in the armed forces or done at least two years' practical work in industry or agriculture. So much attention is now paid to this qualification that increasing numbers of school leavers go into industry straight away without bothering to apply for a year or two. At the present time, only about twenty per cent of each intake has come into the institutions straight from school with no other hurdle than the entrance examination to pass; these are mostly mathematicians or physicists. The others have nearly all put in their time at practical work of some kind—some for more than two years, having tried unsuccessfully on previous occasions to make the grade, working during the day and studying during their spare time for the next attempt.

Students' opinions of this requirement are mixed. Some feel it does them good, like the Moscow student who told a visitor: 'We know ourselves better and we are more enthusiastic about what

we want to do after working with others on the farms and in the factories.' Others regard it as a monumental waste of time, like the young man in Leningrad who was trying to get into the Faculty of Geography in the university after working for two years on building sites: 'Carrying bricks is poor preparation for getting through the entrance exams, and I've forgotten a lot of my school work. If I fail this time I'll try again, certainly, but by next year I'll have forgotten still more.' Others again are in favour of 'seeing something of life first' in principle, but are unenthusiastic about its application to themselves in particular. It is unlikely that the insistence on two years' work experience is popular with students, but if they want to get into an institution most of them have no alternative but to put up with it.

Once admitted, students in higher education receive all tuition free of charge; the only fees payable are hostel charges of 1·50 roubles a month for those not living at home. Apart from the few (between ten and twenty per cent) whose parents' incomes are too high to qualify them for government aid, students who maintain satisfactory progress are awarded stipends. These can be forfeited if the quality of work falls off. Students to whom this happens (and there do not seem to be many of them) are allowed to continue their studies, but receive no state help until their work improves. They can be expelled altogether if this improvement is not forthcoming.

Stipends vary a great deal in amount, depending on seniority, progress, and the student's field of study. First-year students are paid between twenty-seven and forty-three roubles a month; from thirty-three to fifty-two in the second year; from thirty-three to fifty-six in the third and fourth, and from thirty-six to sixty in the fifth. The minimum figures are for those whose records remain barely satisfactory, but students with consistently good performances can attain the maximum award. Higher stipends are paid in some fields, such as mechanical as opposed to chemical engineering, or science as opposed to medicine in order to attract a higher number of better applicants. This varies in accordance with the state requirements from time to time. There are also 'personal stipends' (*personalnye imennye stipendii*), commemorative scholarships paid in addition to the basic stipends; these are awarded only to really outstanding students.

Soviet official pronouncements make much of the system of

student stipends, which certainly presents a marked contrast to conditions in pre-revolutionary times. Actually they are far from enough; the average student's stipend is insufficient for even the barest necessities, and it seems to be accepted, at least in the major cities, that the family, or work, must supplement it. Many students have to rely on help from their families to make ends meet, and some manage to make extra money by taking part-time jobs, such as scene-shifting in theatres or as extras in film-studios, as well as more common and less glamorous casual work. They are expected to join their trade union, and practically all do so. This costs two per cent of the monthly stipend, but carries economic advantages, such as subsidized holidays at student health resorts, reduced prices at theatres, cinemas, and concert halls, and other concessions of this kind. There is a general feeling that student stipends are quite inadequate; but while the economy is as heavily burdened as at present, there is not likely to be any spectacular improvement. Students at Moscow University who complained about their grants were told by Khrushchov that the subsistence level in the U.S.S.R. was reckoned at twenty-five roubles a month, and most of them were doing a good deal better than that. Other aspects of the educational system stand much higher on the priority list as long as students can just get by.

Courses, Curricula, and Assignment of Graduates

Courses in institutions of higher education vary in length from four to five years, though some, such as medicine, last for five and a half years, and part-time courses take at least six. Each year is divided into two terms (*semestry*), from September to January and from February to June, with vacations of two weeks in the winter and two months in the summer—a long academic year by Western standards. Furthermore, the student's time is packed during term. Instruction can extend to as much as six hours a day, six days a week, consisting of formal lectures, seminars, laboratory work, and practical studies, to say nothing of the enormous amount of reading required during the rest of the time. Some weeks each year are set aside for examinations, preparation of dissertations, and the like, so that formal instruction does not fill more than about

thirty or so weeks in the year. Nevertheless, with a total of over five thousand hours of teaching spread over the five years (not counting extra optional subjects), the student's time actually under instruction is roughly twice as great as that of his Western counterpart. Since continued progress is a condition of the payment of stipends and even of continued attendance, there is little room for the leisurely academic or the dilettante. All lectures and seminars are compulsory, though 'cutting' of classes is not unknown. Prescribed reading lists in some departments are so lengthy that for even the most conscientious student it is physically impossible to get through them all—hence much reliance, as the examinations draw near, on the time-honoured international practice of 'spotting' likely questions in advance.

The overloading of students' time is defended by some officials and academics on the grounds that plenty of good hard work is somehow laudable for its own sake, but there is a growing feeling that it has gone too far. At a conference[7] of teachers in higher education in 1961, many speakers voiced their disquiet about the effects of this mass of lectures, seminars, and prescribed reading, not only because of the strain but because it left too little time for independent work, and put too great a premium on mechanical learning and regurgitation. For example, Academician I. N. Vekua, Rector of Novosibirsk University, had no doubts about the lecture system itself, which he described as 'a method proved by time, with many positive features, and fully justified'. But reliance on this system alone, he said, led to 'a passive attitude in the student, whose principal task becomes that of attending lectures, studying notes and swollen textbooks, and taking exams. This is an essential element in learning, but it is bad when it becomes an end in itself'. At another conference on the training of scientists,[8] Dr Blokhintsev, Director of the Joint Nuclear Research Institute and a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., made a similar point in terms that call to mind Khrushchov's pungent turn of phrase. Complaining that the schools, by relying on passive learning, equipped the students poorly for independent work, he went on:

> The worst feature is that such a youth feels himself a schoolboy at college too. He is expected to read textbooks, pass tests, attend compulsory lectures, and least of all to show independence. He is thus

taught so much that he leaves college like a stuffed fish. People may have different ideas about its content, but one thing is certain: it cannot swim.

It seems that some of the authorities at least are aware of the effects of undue reliance on lecture-absorption and textbook-learning, but as yet there are few signs of the students' burdens being appreciably lightened.

All students, whatever their special field, have to attend courses and pass examinations in Marxist-Leninist political theory. These consist of classes in the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (a survey of the history of the U.S.S.R. and twentieth-century world events from the approved political standpoint) during the first two years. Political economy and dialectical and historical materialism make their appearance in the third year, and include a fairly detailed study of Marxist philosophy and economic, political, aesthetic, social, and historical theory. These political courses occupy a considerable part of the students' time; for those studying the humanities, they amount to about 600 hours over the five years. Technologists and scientists, with the greater demands of practical work, have rather less, but even for them Marxist courses take up a total of 300 hours of lectures and exercises. This side of higher education is taken very seriously by the authorities, but according to reports in the Soviet Press is often taught mechanically and dogmatically, with the result that many students regard it as something to be learned for the examinations and then forgotten once the graduation requirements have been fulfilled. In many institutions apathy is so widespread that it is common practice for students to carry on with their other work during the political lectures. How openly they do this depends largely on the quality of the teaching. As one student put it, 'We study for our other subjects only in the back seats if the lecturer is someone who has our respect and interest. If he is not, we work in the front seats as well.' Some claim that they could not get through the required reading in their specialities if they did not do this; others reportedly sleep through the lectures. In spite of demands for livelier political teaching, many of the tutors apparently feel that there is safety in dullness, since these are potentially thorny subjects; in spite of the 'thaw', orthodoxy in this field is still considered more important than vividness. Meanwhile, there are many instances of students,

still interested in politics and philosophy, but repelled by the aridity of the official courses, running informal 'neo-Marxist' discussion groups among themselves.

As for the students' attitudes to the basic doctrines underlying the political courses, few seem to accept Marxist-Leninist theory in detail as interpreted by the Party, except for those working towards careers in the Party *apparat* through the universities and their Komsomol organs. Few again turn completely from Marxism in favour of something else, such as Christianity, though there are some. For the most part they seem either to accept the broad outlines of Marxism, for want of anything else, or to shrug it off as of little relevance to their own lives, interests, and ambitions, paying little attention to the subject at lectures and less outside. Information on this point is scanty and generalization difficult, but it does appear that making the courses compulsory, in itself, achieves little. This is causing the authorities some concern, since it makes nonsense of the original object of including such courses at all, namely to secure commitment rather than mere conformity. Frequent demands are made for more discussion and less dogmatism in political teaching, though how far this has made any difference is difficult to determine.

Apart from political studies and a foreign language, a student's curriculum is confined throughout his course to his special study and a number of allied subjects. These can cover a wide field, rather superficially in some cases but useful enough as aids to the main subject of study. The specialist in Russian language and literature has to profess not only such expected subjects as linguistic theory, literary history, Old Slavonic, etc., but also Latin, a choice of Ukrainian or Byelorussian, and another Slav language; the Spanish or Italian specialist must also study French, Latin, and comparative Romance philology, as well as relevant historical and literary subjects; the historian has to offer Latin, archaeology, ethnology, and a number of specially selected periods, in addition to the fundamental historical studies. All curricula are subject to approval by the Republic or U.S.S.R. Ministry of Higher Education, and are generally uniform throughout the country for any particular subject. At the advanced level there tends to be more variation, but this too is subject to ministerial approval.

Students are assessed continually throughout their courses.

This is done by means of essays, laboratory work, homework assignments, tests, and term examinations, usually a combination of written and oral, marked on a four-point scale from distinction to failure. The final test is the diploma thesis or, as it is known in the technical institutes, the diploma project. This is a study of some particular aspect of the student's speciality, in which he has to make use of the basic material of his subject and demonstrate his ability to use it for research or experiment. The student is allowed considerable time to prepare his diploma work—the entire second term of the final year in most cases—then presents it at the end of the year, and has to defend it in oral examination before a board which includes professors of the institute and representatives of the ministry. If it is accepted he is awarded his diploma; it is sometimes given with distinction, depending not only on the quality of this one piece of work, but also on his performance at the oral examination and his past academic record.

Graduates can be assigned for two or three years to any job in any part of the Soviet Union; at the end of this time they are free to seek employment wherever they wish. (This does not apply to graduates of part-time courses.) The main reason for this system is that there is no other way of adequately staffing schools, institutions, and industrial enterprises in the remote areas of the U.S.S.R., especially since there is still a marked discrepancy between town and country in living standards and amenities. There is no shortage of skilled manpower in the metropolitan centres such as Moscow, Leningrad, or Kiev—there is even a surplus in some fields—but direction seems to be the only way to get graduates to work in the isolated parts of Siberia and Central Asia, or, for that matter, in any rural area; some would prefer a city in Siberia (Novosibirsk is as big as Glasgow) to a village in the depths of the Leningrad *oblast*. All travelling expenses to the new job are paid by the employer, and graduates who fail to report to their assigned posts are, in theory at least, liable to legal penalties. In practice this never seems to happen, though there is a good deal of dodging by individuals who flatly refuse to spend three years at the back of beyond. The institutions are supposed to send the graduate's diploma to his new employer, so that he forfeits it if he fails to appear, but this does not always happen either; there is an unascertainable but large amount of string-pulling behind the

scenes. Certain categories of graduates are awarded a 'free diploma' (*svobodnyi diplom*) which releases them from assignments altogether. The regulations are complicated, but they exempt such people as serving members of the armed forces or graduates with dependent relatives; health considerations are also taken into account; married couples are not separated. Otherwise, on the whole, first choice of the more attractive jobs is given to the better students. As a result, enterprises in the remote areas tend to be staffed by the less outstanding graduates, and often have to put up with a disconcertingly fast turnover of personnel. On the other hand, since good work in unattractive posts is one way of displaying conscientiousness and gaining promotion, they may also have, for a time at least, a few of the more talented and ambitious graduates in their employ to leaven the lump of the more mediocre. Although Soviet students are taught to regard their job assignments as a partial return to society for the benefits of higher education, the system has obvious disadvantages, and there is evidence that the authorities are very greatly concerned at the amount of dodging. Considering the size of the country, and the unevenness of the distribution of population, it is hard to see what else could be done if new areas are to be opened up and the economy to expand. There is also the advantage that graduates are assured of employment in their own field at the end of their course, even if not in the area of their choice; graduate unemployment is unknown in the U.S.S.R.

Higher Degrees and Research

The range of degrees and certificates is more uniform in the U.S.S.R. than in Britain, partly because the system is centrally controlled and partly because there is no clear-cut distinction between degree-awarding institutions and others. All institutions offer only one qualification for their basic courses—the diploma (*diplom*), with or without distinction; there is no differentiation corresponding to our ordinary, general, and honours degrees. At the post-diploma level, two higher degrees can be taken: Candidate of Sciences (*Kandidat nauk*), and Doctor of Sciences (*Doktor nauk*). Both require advanced study and original research, and carry considerable financial advantages and social

prestige for their possessors. In spite of their titles, these degrees are not limited to the scientific field any more than our own Ph.D. is limited to the study of philosophy.

The degree of Candidate of Sciences (or of Pedagogic or Technical or Medical Sciences, etc.) requires at least three years of further study after graduation, in accordance with special programmes adopted by the institution and approved by the ministry, with an examination at the end. In addition, the aspiring Candidate (*aspirant*) must conduct a piece of original research for publication in his own field, and defend it at a public hearing before an examining board appointed by the appropriate institution. Few graduates are admitted to higher degree work direct from their diploma course, but usually have to work for two years or more before they can apply. Financial support for full-time post-graduate students is much more generous than for under-graduates, often amounting to as much as their normal salary; many stay in their jobs and study in their spare time. Equivalents can be misleading, but the Soviet Candidate degree is probably somewhere about the standard of an English Ph.D.

The degree of Doctor of Sciences is much more rarely awarded, and is regarded as an extremely high academic distinction. To qualify for this honour, a specialist must hold the Candidate degree, have done several years of active work in his field, and conducted and published major independent research, which he eventually has to defend before an academic council. V. I. Yelyutin, U.S.S.R. Minister of Higher Education, reports that in the twenty years from 1937 to 1957 12,000 Doctorates were awarded in the entire country, compared with over 100,000 Candidate degrees. All awards of higher degrees are subject to confirmation by the Supreme Qualification Commission of the Ministry of Higher Education of the U.S.S.R., known as the V.A.K. (*Vysshaya Attestatsionnaya Kommissiya*); this confirmation, particularly in the case of Doctorates, is far from automatic, by all accounts.

Until recently, all members of the teaching staffs of institutions of higher education were required to spend an average of three hours a day on research. Such precision seems to have proved impracticable, and it is now stated that there is more flexibility in the allocation of time between research and teaching. But research is still regarded as supremely important, and

an integral part of the work of higher institutions, both because it is vital to the interests of Soviet society and because it keeps the staff from sinking into an academic rut.

Cooperation between higher educational establishments and industrial concerns is continually stressed, much of the most important research being conducted as a joint venture between an institute and an industrial plant. The Kalinin Polytechnical Institute in Leningrad, for example, is currently cooperating with the electrical industry to find ways of increasing the supply of power in the next twelve years. More surprisingly, the Herzen Pedagogic Institute in the same city was responsible for devising the alloys used in the carburettor of a new kind of tractor recently produced by the Kirov plant. Technical and scientific research is carefully planned throughout the country, with the aim of dovetailing the industrial organizations and the institutes into one integrated scheme. In practice, this often proves rather difficult; research has a habit of not going according to plan. Maintaining such a scheme where the two sides often fail to coordinate requires a good deal of effort. On the other hand, there are obvious advantages in close cooperation between higher education and the national economy, and it also serves to keep educational work 'close to life', and fulfils the Marxist requirement of the 'unity of theory and practice'.

Organization and Staffing

The head of a VUZ is known as a Rector and is assisted by a Deputy Rector or Prorector. They are appointed and dismissed by the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Higher Education, to which they are responsible for the efficient running of the institution. The chief organ for planning and administration is the Academic Council (*Uchony soviet*), roughly equivalent to the Senate of a British University. It is chaired by the Rector, and is composed of deputy rectors, heads of faculties and departments, some of the professors, and representatives of the Communist Party, Komsomol, the trade union, and the ministry. Among its duties are the planning of teaching and research, the confirmation of the appointments of lecturers and assistants, the nomination of senior lecturers and professors, and the awarding of higher degrees.

Each institution is divided into faculties (*fakultety*), which are more narrowly defined than in Britain. Instead of faculties of Arts or Science, there are faculties of Chemistry, Biology, History, etc. Faculties have their own Academic Councils; these in effect appoint the faculty staff, subject to confirmation from above. Each is headed by a Dean (*Dekan*), selected from among the faculty's professors by the Director and Academic Council of the institution. His duties include planning and coordination of teaching and research within the faculty, the organization of entrance examinations, and the selection, on the basis of final examination results, of graduates for post-diploma study. This administrative work takes up a considerable part of the Dean's time, but carries an extra payment of fifty per cent of his basic salary.

Faculties are subdivided into departments (*kafedry*). The Russian word can also be rendered 'chair', but this is liable to be misleading. A *kafedra*, unlike a Chair in a British University, may have several professors, and is headed by a Departmental Chairman (*Zaveduyushchii kafedroi*) who is usually, though not necessarily, a professor. Like the Dean of the Faculty, he is paid extra for administrative duties; he is also expected to do his full share of teaching and research.

Each department deals with a special field within its faculty. For example, the Faculty of Geography in Moscow's Lomonosov State University has fourteen departments: general physical geography, physical geography of the U.S.S.R., physical geography of foreign countries, economic geography of the U.S.S.R., economic geography of foreign countries, geomorphology, geodesy and cartography, hydrology, climatology, botanical geography, soil geography, palaeogeography, geography of the Arctic, and the history of geography. Not all faculties are so minutely subdivided; in the Leningrad Herzen Pedagogic Institute, the Faculty of Foreign Languages has four departments, English, German, French, and Spanish, while the History Faculty has only two—General History and History of the U.S.S.R.

Departmental staffs vary in numbers and composition, but can include up to four or five professors, who usually hold a Doctor's degree; readers or senior lecturers (*dotsenty*), mostly with Candidate degrees; lecturers (*prepodavateli*, literally instructors), and assistant lecturers (*assistenty*). There may also be

a number of research specialists (*sotrudniki*) without teaching duties, and, where applicable, laboratory technicians, demonstrators, and the like. Appointments are made by the institute's Academic Council after advertising in the Press, and require confirmation by the Ministry of Higher Education for the posts of reader or professor. All academic staff formally give up their posts every five years; their appointments are in practice nearly always renewed, but the alternative remains a theoretical possibility to prevent staff from atrophying through inactivity.

Future Developments

Prediction is always hazardous, even in a country such as the U.S.S.R. which plans its educational and economic development years in advance. As has been shown by the changes of 1958, forecasts can fail to work out and lines of policy may alter. Nevertheless, a number of trends can be discerned for the immediate future in Soviet higher education.

Expansion is likely to continue as the needs of the economy for more specialists, especially in the technical field, increase. Since money is short, and the cost of the higher educational system immense, most of the expansion will be in the field of part-time education, evening, and correspondence courses. These have the double advantage of being cheaper to run and making sure that students do not become cut off from the realities of working life. By 1965, the authorities expect to have increased the 1959 number of graduates by half as much again, and to have doubled the number of engineers to an output of 100,000 a year. Many of these will begin their courses on an evening or correspondence basis, transferring to the full-time courses after two years. Seasonal alternation of work and study for agricultural students will also be increased.

More emphasis will be placed on research and its integration with the national economy. In 1962 the State Planning Commission put into action a scheme whereby 1,000 research posts a year were to be made available for members of the teaching staffs of institutions to work for doctorate theses 'on pressing theoretical and applied problems'. Institutions have also been empowered to release staff from teaching duties for up to two years if the importance of their research warrants it, to second staff on full pay to industrial research establishments, and to

increase the number of post-graduate places, especially for students seconded by their factories or collective farms. Since teaching duties will also become more pressing with the expansion of the institutes, an all-round increase of staff will be called for.

It is extremely unlikely that the expansion of VUZ places will come anywhere near to coping with the increasing number of eligible applicants from the secondary schools. The present gap is more likely to widen than diminish. This could mean a raised standard of academic ability among entrants, but it seems that the authorities are determined, for social and political reasons, not to make this the sole criterion for entry, as can be seen from the emphasis laid on practical work experience, character references, and the like. This pressure for entry, and the continued pressure and weeding-out throughout the entire course, is likely to leave little place for the political waverer, the leisurely scholar, or the '*byeloruchki*' (white-handed) disdainful of manual or applied work. This at least, is the aim of the authorities, though it remains to be seen how far they will be successful. There are signs, however, that many Soviet educationists are alarmed at the sheer weight of cramming and memorization called for in most courses; if their concern leads to action, this may result in the amount of prescribed reading becoming a little more realistic. Even so, it is likely to remain formidable, and the Soviet student will continue to have a busy time. There are signs, too, that many educationists are unenthusiastic about the scholastic effects of the long work periods, however socially admirable the idea may be. In certain theoretical fields, such as mathematics and physics, little attention is paid to this requirement, a tendency which may well spread in the future, at least in the pure sciences. Some time will have to go by before it can be seen how successful the attempt has been to integrate practical and academic work in all branches of Soviet higher education.

1. The number of institutions can fluctuate, owing to reorganization, while the number of students rises steadily. In 1960–1, for example, there were 739 institutions as against 880 in 1950–1; in the same decade the student population increased from about 1,356,000 to 2,395,000. (*Vysshee obrazovanie v SSSR: Statisticheski sbornik.* Gosstatizdat, Moscow, 1961.)

2. 'Shift' students carry on with their jobs, their classes being ar-

ranged to coincide with shifts when they are not working. Part-time courses are sometimes run by the 'evening departments' (*vechernie otdeleniya*) of the ordinary institutions, sometimes by special 'part-time institutions' (*zaochnye VUZy*).

3. Some use has been made of radio and television to help with the correspondence courses, but only to a limited extent. At a conference on higher education, V. I. Nyunka, Secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party, said that it was time 'to stop tinkering with the problem' and suggested that nothing less than an entire radio station devoted to the purpose would do.

(*Vestnik Vysshei Shkoly*, 1961, No. 8, pp. 59–60.)

4. *Vestnik Vysshei Shkoly*, 1961, No. 4, pp. 6–7. The Statute (*Polozhenie o vysshikh uchebnykh zavedeniyakh SSSR*) replaces the 'Model Charter' (*Tipovoi ustav*) which had been in force since 1938.

5. Some disciplines, such as law and economics, are taught both in universities and special institutes.

6. 1955 figures. Prokofiev, Chilikin, Tulpanov: *Higher Education in the U.S.S.R.*, UNESCO, 1961.

7. *Vestnik Vysshei Shkoly*, 1961, No. 8, pp. 50–2.

8. *Izvestiya*, 27 December 1960.

6 Teachers

Training

Teacher training in the U.S.S.R., as in many continental countries, is still based on separate institutions for different grades of teacher. On the whole, teachers of secondary school classes (forms V to XI) are given a full higher education at a university or pedagogic institute, while those for the elementary classes (forms I to IV) and for the pre-school stages receive their training at specialized secondary schools. The whole structure of teacher training has been subject to continual reorganization since 1952, the trend being to reduce the number of different kinds of institution. In the near future, it is claimed, all school-teachers will have a full higher educational course; at the present time, however, this process is not complete, and though the separation of primary and secondary training is not as clear-cut as it was, it still remains. For the moment, then, teachers receive their basic training at three different types of institutions—pedagogic schools, pedagogic institutes, and universities.

Pedagogic Schools (*Pedagogicheskie uchilishcha*)
These middle schools were set up in 1954 to take over from the older type which provided a four-year course for students who came straight from the seven-year general schools. By 1958 the transition was practically complete; pedagogic schools now provide a two-year course for students with a full secondary eleven-year education, which qualifies them for work in kindergartens and the first four forms of the eight-year school.

Pedagogic schools typically have two faculties, one for primary and one for pre-school education. In the Russian areas the vast majority of students are girls (e.g. all but seven out of

540 in Moscow Pedagogic School No. 2 in 1958), though in the non-Russian parts, especially in the Central Asian republics with their Muslim tradition, the proportion of males is nearer forty or fifty per cent.

The curriculum, as we might expect in a short course of this type, is heavily loaded. Students are instructed in the various primary subjects—Russian literature and language, mathematics, history and geography, drawing, music, physical education, and work-study—together with teaching methods, psychology, pedagogy, history of pedagogy, one foreign language, and the usual political subjects. Teaching practice starts in the first year with the observation of lessons in the primary school attached to the institute; later, the students are taken to ordinary schools where they watch demonstration lessons and discuss them with their tutors. In the second year they are attached for a continuous period of three weeks to a school where they take a full range of lessons under the supervision of the Director of the school. At the end of the second year they sit their examinations and are awarded their diplomas in pre-school or primary teaching.

All these subjects, together with teaching practice, are a great deal to get through in a mere two years; inevitably, the students cover the subject-matter rather superficially, and have an extremely crowded time into the bargain. Nobody pretends that this arrangement is satisfactory, but since the pedagogic schools are regarded as temporary expedients, efforts are directed towards replacing them with higher courses rather than improving them within the framework of the present system. How soon this can be done is anyone's guess; there were still 275 of them functioning in 1961, with a total of 135,000 students. It is even possible that there are a few of the old pedagogic schools left, providing four-year courses for the graduates of the incomplete secondary schools. An increasing proportion of primary teachers now trains at the pedagogic institutes, but it will be a few years yet before this is the general rule.

Pedagogic Institutes (*Pedagogicheskie instituty*)

Pedagogic institutes have been growing in numbers and importance over the past decade. Originally, they trained only specialist teachers for the upper forms of the secondary schools; in 1952, they absorbed the Teachers' Institutes, which provided

staff for the lower forms; and now they are gradually taking over the functions of the pedagogic schools as well. In 1956, courses in most faculties were lengthened to five years, but were reduced again to four years in 1963.

Entrance to pedagogic institutes is by competitive examination, character reference, and priority placing. The competition is keen: about one third of all applicants is admitted. Most successful applicants have, as elsewhere in the higher educational system, done two or three years' practical work, only about twenty per cent coming straight from school. Some of those with work experience come from factories, farms, or the armed forces, but many are graduates of pedagogic schools who have taught primary classes for two or three years and now want to improve their qualifications.

Like other colleges of higher education, pedagogic institutes are divided into faculties catering for the various special fields. These differ slightly from place to place, but those of the Leningrad Institute show the general pattern. This college now has eleven faculties: (1) history and philology (with departments of general history, foreign, Soviet and Russian literature, Russian language, and methods of teaching these subjects); (2) physics and fundamentals of production; (3) foreign languages (English, German, French, and English, Germanic and Romance philology); (4) mathematics and technical drawing; (5) art; (6) natural sciences (anatomy and physiology, botany, zoology, agriculture, chemistry, methods, etc.); (7) geography (including geology); (8) physical education (with hygiene and sport); (9) defectology (which trains teachers for schools for handicapped children); (10) general (covering psychology, educational theory, and political subjects); (11) pedagogy. The last-named is expanding to take over from the pedagogic schools. The Leningrad Institute is unusual in having a special 'Northern Department' in the faculty of history and philosophy. It trains students from various Arctic minorities for general teaching among their own peoples. There are thirty-seven different nationalities represented, with about half a dozen students from each.

The curriculum of the pedagogic institutes can be divided into three main areas: political and general courses common to all students everywhere, educational theory, and the special subjects. The political courses call for little comment, since they

are substantially the same as those in the universities and elsewhere. They take up a slightly smaller proportion of the time than in a university, but the difference is tiny. General courses include sport, physical education, and a foreign language; altogether they take up not much more than six per cent of the curriculum.

The courses in educational theory are obligatory for students, and account for between thirteen and twenty per cent of the time in most cases. The main items here are psychology (mainly Pavlovian, though some psychoanalytic doctrines, such as those of Freud, make an occasional if brief appearance; mental testing techniques are, of course, not taught); pedagogy (educational theory in the widest sense, ranging from general educational aims to problems of moral education, discipline, etc.); history of pedagogy, including some comparative education; and general principles of teaching method. There are also subsidiary courses in school hygiene, films and visual aids, the running of extra-curricular activities, and the like.

Special subjects make up the major elements of the course. When training was lengthened from four to five years in 1956, students were required to qualify in two or more subjects. The principal groups were: mathematics and physics; mathematics and technical drawing; physics and fundamentals of production; biology, chemistry and fundamentals of agriculture; geography and biology; two foreign languages; Russian language and literature with history, and so on. Further, all science curricula included vocational and polytechnical courses. The extra year was more than swallowed up by the additional subjects, and complaints of overloading became frequent. One reason for broadening the course was the extreme difficulty of staffing rural schools adequately with single-subject specialists. One suggested compromise was to have students take one special subject with one or two subsidiary subjects on a less demanding level; but eventually it was decided to drop multiple qualification altogether, and in 1963[1] four-year courses were reintroduced with specialization in a single subject.

Teaching practice now begins in the first year. It starts in a modest way with an average of one day a week observing and discussing lessons, and works up to continuous periods of teaching in an ordinary school, with occasional supervision by the head. These continuous periods may be spent in local schools,

but since there are often not enough of them in the town to take all the students, many may have to practise in rural schools far from the institutes. In addition to this, students must put in three weeks in the summer vacation after their third year as youth leaders at a Pioneer camp. This training for extra-curricular work is regarded as an important part of their course. As an official of one institute put it, 'They have to learn not only to be teachers of special subjects, but teachers of children as well.' Considering the important role of the youth movement in the entire educational system, this emphasis is only to be expected.

Universities

It is possible in the U.S.S.R., as in England, to go into teaching direct from a university without further training of any kind. Unlike the English universities, however, those of the U.S.S.R. prepare for this by including pedagogic subjects, teaching methods, and teaching practice in the basic course. Officially, the universities are supposed to direct into teaching a high proportion of their graduates annually—sixty per cent of the mathematicians, physicists, and chemists, and no less than eighty per cent of their biologists, geographers, historians, and 'philologists' (i.e., graduates in Russian and foreign languages). In fact, a far smaller number than this is sent into the schools, and many of those who are directed fail to appear.

The universities contribute only a minority of recruits to the teaching profession, compared with the other colleges. In 1959, for example, it was estimated that the number of new teachers from the pedagogic institutes was eight times as great as that from the universities. Proportionately small though this may seem, it is still a large number, and the universities can be considered an important source of teachers.

The training given at the universities has the same general outlines as at the pedagogic institutes, but the emphasis is rather different. Students there spent, as we have seen, rather more time on the political subjects, while the pedagogic courses are less prominent—little more than half in most cases. There is also less teaching practice, amounting to no more than two months altogether. Study of the special subject, on the other hand, is a good deal deeper. In spite of the official equality of the two types of establishment, it is generally felt

that there is a real gap—one claimed to be narrowing, but a gap none the less. On average, the university graduate is about a year ahead of his institute-trained colleague as a subject specialist, but is liable to be a less competent teacher and less well versed in educational theory. One has the advantage in depth, the other in breadth, and it is felt in the schools that both are needed.

Advanced Courses and Research

Institutes for the Improvement of Qualifications

The object of these institutes is to provide refresher courses and advice centres for practising teachers. The first was opened in Moscow in 1938, and the system has rapidly expanded since then; at the present time, Moscow has a central institute and one subsidiary for every district of the city. There are over a hundred in the U.S.S.R. as a whole.

These institutes help teachers to keep up to date with the latest developments in subject-matter and teaching methods, especially in such fields as science, languages, literature, and history, where changes are liable to be rapid for a variety of reasons, political as well as educational. General courses are normally organized on the basis of one day a week, teachers being released from their schools to attend. They are expected to take revision courses at least once every five years in the first fifteen years of service; this is not always observed, however, some established teachers having shown great reluctance to revise their methods of instruction. In such cases the point is not normally pressed, since there is no room for all to take such courses. There are also special short-term courses, full-time on full pay, which deal with particular problems. These are nearly always voluntary. In 1959, after the introduction of the Khrushchov reforms, all teachers were expected to take a course in the institutes on polytechnical training, so that they could better implement the new policies. Many evaded and some bluntly refused; once again, if only for practical reasons, the point was not pressed any further. Only a few teachers, however, seem to shy away from the institutes; the difficulty is not getting them to come but trying to find room for those who want to take the courses or use the advice facilities. It is

stated that over five thousand a year make use of the institutes in Moscow alone.

The Improvement Institutes deal with more than teaching methods, though this is the most prominent part of their activities. The central institute in Moscow, for example, has nineteen departments. Most of them, such as the departments of elementary teaching, subject specialities, polytechnical studies, and the like, are principally concerned with teaching technique in some way, but there are also departments of pedagogy, extra-curricular work, a library of educational films, a general educational library, and workshops and laboratories where teachers can try out techniques for themselves. The institutes also produce a flood of pamphlets on methods and other school problems.

Many pedagogic institutes also provide their own refresher courses for teachers in service. The Moscow Pedagogic Institute of Foreign Languages, for example (a specialized establishment which trains interpreters and translators as well as language teachers) has a variety of these. In addition to the 6,000 day and part-time students doing the basic course, there are over a hundred teachers, released from their schools, studying to teach their own special subjects in a foreign language in one of the special 'Language Schools'; six-month improvement courses for language specialists are also given, as well as more advanced two-year courses (full-time, with a hundred roubles a month stipend), which can lead to a higher teaching diploma.

Post-graduate Studies

Like other types of VUZ, the pedagogic institutes provide facilities for post-graduate study and research. The normal procedure is for the graduate to take up his teaching duties for two or three years, then apply for admission to the higher courses. The proportion accepted is little more than three per cent of all graduates, though it can be higher in some places; the Leningrad Institute,[2] for instance, had over 400 post-graduates in 1962–3 out of a total *enrolment* of ten thousand. The course lasts for three years of full time study, the student being paid his full teacher's salary in the meantime. At the end of the third year he presents his thesis in the usual way, and if successful is awarded the degree of Candidate of Pedagogic Sciences (*Kandidat Pedagogicheskikh Nauk*), which entitles him to a higher salary, to say nothing of the increased prestige. Alternatively, the teacher can

study for his higher degree by correspondence for four years, with an additional year of full-time study at the institute to prepare his thesis. All post-graduate students are supervised by a member of the staff of the appropriate department.

Members of the staffs of the institutes are, of course, also expected to conduct research. Occasionally, as we have seen in the previous chapter, this is not always strictly educational, but such cases are exceptions. A few examples from the Herzen Institute in Leningrad will serve to show the kind of research normally carried on. The Department of Pedagogy is working on problems of consciousness in learning, moral education, and polytechnical education, and is planning a textbook of educational theory for use in teacher training, subject to the usual ministerial approval. The Department of History has produced a textbook of English history, now a standard text throughout the R.S.F.S.R.; the various methods departments have written textbooks for a long time, and are now working on the production and improvement of aural and visual teaching aids, which have until recently been something of a Cinderella of the Soviet educational system. As elsewhere, research is planned in advance, stress being laid on cooperation with other departments, institutes, and research bodies, and with industry.

The Academy of Pedagogic Sciences

The Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. (*Akademiya Pedagogicheskikh Nauk RSFSR*) is a body with no equivalent in this country. Founded in 1943, it exists to conduct advanced research, to spread educational information among the general public, to train post-graduate students and teachers for pedagogic institutes, and to act as a general clearing-house for educational studies and discussion. Although it is officially concerned with the Russian Federation only, its influence is felt throughout the other fourteen republics of the Soviet Union.

As in the Royal Society or the Académie Française, members are elected by their fellows, not appointed by any outside body. There are two categories of membership, full members (*deistvitelnye chleny*) and corresponding members (*chleny-korrespondenty*), both entitled to the rank of 'Academician' ('*Akademik*') and a large extra salary. Membership also brings the holder great prestige, both in educational circles and in society at large. There are about a hundred academicians at present.

The Academy is made up of a number of special institutes, each devoted to a particular branch of educational research. Examples are the Research Institute for the History and Theory of Pedagogy, the Research Institute of Teaching Methods, the Research Institute of Defectology, the Leningrad Natural Science Institute, the Research Institute of Psychology, the Institute for Education in the Non-Russian schools, and so forth. These are subdivided into specialist departments; the first-named, for example, has departments of pre-school education, polytechnical education, history of education, etc., while the Institute of Defectology has departments dealing with the problems of each specific kind of physical and mental defect. Under the Academy's jurisdiction come also the Ushinsky State Library of Education, the National Education Museum in Leningrad, and the Research Archives, a vast collection of research documents and papers by Soviet and foreign educationists.

The regular business of the Academy is run by a Praesidium of about half a dozen full members. This body, apart from routine administration, is responsible for the Bureau for the Study of Foreign Education and the Academy's publishing house, among other things. Through this press a large number of educational journals[3] is issued; among the most important are *Sovietskaya Pedagogika* (*Soviet Pedagogy*), *Voprosy Psikhologii* (*Problems of Psychology*), and *Semya i Shkola* (*Family and School*). To these can be added many textbooks and other educational works. The compilation of a Children's Encyclopedia is still in progress, but will not be complete for some time; a Pedagogic Encyclopedia is also projected.[4] The Academy also sponsors popular lectures on educational topics, and conducts contests ('Pedagogic readings') in which teachers and other educational workers submit reports and studies. The prize-winning entries are subsequently published. Finally, the Academy runs a number of experimental schools, which prove of enormous value to its army of research workers.

The Educational Trade Union

There is now only one union for all teachers in the U.S.S.R.; known as the 'U.S.S.R. Trade Union of Workers in Education, Higher Schools, and Research Establishments' ('*Profsoyuz*

Rabotnikov Prosveshcheniya, Vysshei Shkoly i Nauchnykh Uchrezdenii SSSR'); it is the result of a merger in 1957 of the two separate bodies for school and higher educational staff. Since membership of a Soviet trade union is determined by a person's place of employment rather than his craft or professional qualification, this body includes every school and college worker from an academician to a school cleaner in its current membership of over four million. Twenty per cent of these are said to be members of the Communist Party, a marked contrast to the proportion of party membership in the population at large—about four and a half per cent—and yet another eloquent testimony to the close links between the educational system and the political aims of the Soviet régime. Membership of the union is officially voluntary, but ninety-eight per cent join as soon as they start work, most of the remainder coming in not much later. Subscriptions are not fixed as an absolute sum, but are reckoned at one-half per cent of the member's salary, whatever that may be.

The educational union, like other Soviet trade unions, is not a bargaining body in the Western sense. Its functions do include making representations on pay, pensions, and conditions to the government, but head-on clashes are of course avoided by the fact that the unions are, by virtue of party control, instruments and not opponents of government policy. It does serve, however, to make teachers' views known, can protect its members from unfair dismissal and bureaucratic interference (sometimes), and helps to enforce regulations on school building, heating, lighting, etc., which are not infrequently evaded, to the teachers' detriment, by local officials.

Much of the union's work is in the field of welfare services for its members. From part of the subscriptions, and other sources, it maintains a social insurance fund which enables teachers to receive full pay during illness, and provides hostels for old or disabled members. It also runs many recreational facilities—clubs, gymnasia, sports-grounds, and the like, and performs other services such as helping teachers to find accommodation when they take up jobs in new areas.

In conjunction with the Ministry of Education of the R.S.F.S.R., the union publishes a thrice-weekly newspaper, *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* (*The Teachers' Newspaper*). This is in many ways one of the most valuable of its activities, for this paper not

only publishes news of interest to teachers, but provides a platform for controversies and complaints, and is frequently instrumental in having grievances put right. Many of the abuses in the system, due to neglect or unwarranted interference by local officials, depend on silence for their continuation; teachers often write to the *Gazeta* to complain of these abuses, and this is often followed by comment in its columns and the dispatch of a reporter to investigate. This is often enough; in the more serious cases an official inquiry may follow, with at least the public apology of the guilty functionary, and even with his demotion, dismissal, or arrest. In one recent case, the headmaster of a rural school, with the connivance of the chairman of the village Soviet (who happened to be his brother-in-law), compelled the schoolchildren to build a garage for him, work in his garden, and perform most of his wife's domestic tasks. Teachers' protests to the local authorities that this was an illegitimate interpretation of 'socially useful labour' were, not surprisingly, of no avail. A letter of complaint was followed by a visit from one of the roving reporters of the *Gazeta*. Before very long, the headmaster and his obliging brother-in-law were both removed from their positions and publicly denounced in ringing terms, though nothing worse seems to have happened to them.

Comparatively few of the grievances dealt with are as serious as this, but the misplaced enthusiasm of Party officials often needs intervention of this kind to provide a remedy. One complaint in 1962 came from six rural teachers in the Tatar Republic, alleging that they had been dragooned into agricultural work in their spare time by the local Party Secretary, and had been called back from their holidays to help with the harvest. The *Gazeta* pointed out that this was totally illegal, and drew the matter to the attention of higher authorities, who promptly put a stop to the practice and rapped the over-zealous official over the knuckles. Complaints about staffing, overloading of timetables, shortage of housing for teachers, excessive demands on extra-curricular time, problems about holiday pay, and many other such matters are aired in the paper's columns. Usually, too, it can be announced within a short time that the situation has been put right. How far this is an indication of the papers' effectiveness as a righter of wrongs, and how far the likelihood of remedy determines what complaints are published in the first place, is a matter for speculation. Some observers have

compared the role of *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* to that of the *Ombudsman* in Scandinavia. This is true up to a point—the paper does put forward complaints and takes steps to put them right. The comparison is exaggerated, however, because the *Ombudsman* is an independent agent, while the *Gazeta* is not. It would not get very far, for instance, in dealing with grievances that the central authorities were unable or unwilling to rectify. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that teachers in difficulties often find a valuable ally in *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*.

Teaching Loads and Class Size

The basic working week for a Soviet teacher consists of eighteen hours in the secondary classes (forms V to XI), twenty-four hours for primary classes (forms I to IV). Any extra time is paid for at the appropriate rate. As in most Continental countries, teachers are free to go when not actually on duty.[5] Most teachers in fact put in more than the basic number of hours—just how much more depends on the local staffing situation. In the cities, for example, between twenty and twenty-five hours a week is the average load in most secondary subjects; in some rural areas, on the other hand, there are grave staffing difficulties, and teachers at the same stage may find themselves doing thirty hours a week or more. In spite of the extra pay, this is far from welcome, to judge from complaints appearing regularly in the *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*.

Demands on a teacher's time go beyond actual classwork. All are expected, as a matter of policy, to visit the homes of their pupils, attend parent-teacher meetings, take some part in extra-curricular work, and so forth. Where staff is adequate, these extras are not unduly burdensome, but where there is a shortage, the extra duties as well as the teaching load can pile up alarmingly. One extreme case (presumably extreme, since it was the subject of outraged complaint by the lady's husband) that was recently brought to light concerned a chemistry teacher in Minsk: apart from a teaching load of twenty-two hours, her regular activities (most of them weekly) included a political seminar, a class-teacher's period, a meeting of the Teachers' Soviet, the school's chemistry 'circle', meetings with the Parents' Committee, 'School Evenings', and so forth. This

may not be typical in extent, but complaints about excessive demands on time are frequent; clearly many officials have failed to appreciate that they have homes of their own and that time is not elastic.

Size of classes and pupil-teacher ratios again vary considerably from place to place. The national average pupil-teacher ratio is seventeen to one, the average class thirty or more strong, but again there is a discrepancy between town and country. The more remote areas, as usual, come off worst—one reason for the frequent delays in changing over from seven-year to eight-year schooling in some parts;[6] it is difficult to get sufficient staff to cope with the increase in the number of pupils. Even in the more favoured areas, classes still tend to be large. It is possible that the formal manner of teaching makes class numbers matter less than they would if activity methods were more in vogue.

School Directors

The Head of a school (just as likely to be a woman as a man) is not merely its chief administrative officer; he is required to take a proportion of the regular teaching duties as well, to keep in touch with the classes by regularly observing his staff at work, and to be a 'model teacher' into the bargain by giving advice and taking demonstration lessons from time to time. In view of his other duties, his maximum teaching load is usually twelve hours a week; this may be increased in exceptional circumstances (such as a particularly acute staff shortage), but even then the absolute maximum is eighteen hours a week.

On top of this he has a considerable amount of organizational work—timetabling, planning excursions, filling forms and making returns, chairing meetings of the school's pedagogic council, attending parents' committee meetings, interviewing problem children and their parents, helping to find accommodation for his staff in rural areas, and so on. In country areas the extra work is liable to spill over into a variety of activities outside the school, for the director is often (like the old Scottish Dominie) a leading member of the community by virtue of his position and intellectual standing. This has the advantage of making him a locally influential figure, but he is also expected

to play a leading part in local affairs, with consequent heavy demands on his time. One country headmaster, whose burden seems not unusual, wrote to the *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* that he was 'overwhelmed with meetings, deliberations, and journeys', listing some of the duties he was expected to perform in addition to his normal teaching and school administrative work: as a prominent local worthy he had been elected to both the village Soviet and the Soviet of the near-by town, and had to attend their meetings, and those of their executive committees, as well as educational seminars, meetings of heads of schools, and the like. He did not question his duty to pull his weight in community affairs, but felt that things had gone too far, adding that he avoided the telephone in case some new series of meetings would call for his presence. Once again, overloading of this kind seems much heavier in the rural areas, where teachers and intellectuals generally are much thinner on the ground. City directors may still have extra duties, in school and out, but on a more moderate scale.

A director's powers are in some respects less extensive than those of the headmaster in a British school. Although he is entitled to see that teachers are complying with the regulation schemes of work and teaching methods, he is not apparently entitled to order one teacher to take the class of another who is absent. Any intervention he makes in a class-teacher's work can be subject to an appeal to the Teachers' Soviet. One rather odd example of this was reported in *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*. A pupil had handed in an essay on the poetry of Mayakovsky; although this poet is highly thought of officially and generally, the pupil's assessment of his talents was severely critical, to put it mildly. Scandalized, the teacher awarded it a mark of 2, the second lowest possible, whereupon the pupil appealed to the director. He liked it and re-marked it as a 5, the highest possible. This time the teacher appealed to the Teachers' Soviet, which compromised with a 3. The report of this incident was followed by a spate of letters on one side or the other, no official comment being made;[7] the significant thing is that nobody questioned the right to appeal in either case. In general, the director's powers, compared with those of his counterpart in this country, are limited on the one hand by the high degree of central control in the educational system, and on the other hand by his staff through their various committees.

Salaries and Pensions

It is extremely difficult to make any real comparison between the salaries of teachers in the U.S.S.R. and this country. For one thing, the official exchange rate (2.50 roubles to the pound) is completely artificial; four roubles to the pound would be more realistic. For another, living costs in the two countries are difficult to compare. Generally, the Soviet cost of living, even in the cities, is higher than in Britain, but in detail, the picture is more confusing; many commodities that take up a major part of our spending (such as cars, refrigerators, and the like) are scarce or unobtainable, and many other things, notably clothing and some foods, are dearer; but some items, such as rent, books, records, transport, and cigarettes are much cheaper. Another difficulty is that complete figures of full salary scales in teaching are not available, a fact which suggests that the authorities are not particularly proud of them, and which makes it awkward to assess their value in roubles, let alone their equivalent in sterling. In the meantime, then, we have to make do with a rough outline of the wage structure and a few generalizations.

Soviet teachers' salaries depend on a number of factors,[8] the most important of which are:

1. The teacher's educational qualification. In the absence of detailed figures it is not possible to judge the exact differential, but a teacher who has been to a pedagogic institute is paid more than one who has been only to a pedagogic school. The difference is probably between ten and fifteen per cent.

2. Length of service. Again, scarcity of figures makes it impossible to determine the exact scale of increments, but it may be an average increase of up to one per cent per year. Unlike our system of a gradual rise every year, Soviet salaries seem to go up by a bigger jump every few years.

3. Location of the school. Extra payments are made for teaching in certain remote areas. These can be quite substantial —twenty per cent in the Yakut Republic and parts of Irkutsk Province, fifty per cent extra, plus periodic leave to more central parts, for teaching in Sakhalin, Kamchatka, and northern tribal areas. In some places the salary can even be doubled. Until recently, teachers were paid more in the town than in the country, though rural teachers were entitled to free housing, fuel and light, and where applicable a plot of land for their

own use. This differential, for teachers with higher educational qualifications, was about five roubles a month at the bottom of the scale, rising to thirteen roubles at the top. It was removed, together with the gradations according to the level of class taught, when teachers' salaries were increased by the law of 15 July 1964.

Additional salary can be paid on a number of other grounds. The most important are: (1) Any extra teaching over the basic minimum of eighteen hours a week in secondary and twenty-four hours in primary classes. Most teachers in fact do this.[9] (2) The holding of higher degrees, such as Candidate of Pedagogic Sciences, or for the award of such titles as 'Honoured Teacher'.[10] (3) Holding posts of responsibility, such as director of a school, class adviser, or acting as school librarian. (4) Marking exercises, etc. This appears to be a flat rate of six roubles a month. (5) Setting up and checking laboratory equipment. (6) Certain extra-curricular duties, such as running school clubs or 'circles'. (7) Teaching in special schools for the handicapped—an additional twenty-five per cent. (8) Teaching a subject in a foreign language in a 'language school'—fifteen per cent extra.

Holiday pay is calculated not on the basic salary, but on average actual earnings, including extra payments such as overtime.

Teachers' salaries, consequently, vary a good deal in amount, though the range is less than it was. It has been reckoned[11] that before the recent increase primary teachers earned between sixty and ninety roubles a month, secondary teachers between eighty-five and 150 roubles, including extra payments. Under the new dispensation,[12] graduate teachers start at eighty roubles a month, rising to 137 roubles in the course of twenty-five years' service, not counting extra payments. The rates for teachers trained in pedagogic schools are rather less. By way of contrast, a professor of science earns from 600 to 1,000, a professor of medicine from 400 to 600, and a senior lecturer from 300 to 500 roubles a month. It may be more instructive to compare a teacher's pay with that of a skilled worker in industry, which can range between 100 and 250 roubles a month.[13]

Pensions, amounting to forty per cent of the full salary, are payable at the end of twenty-five years' service. A teacher who carries on working after this time is entitled to full salary and pension as well.

Even allowing for the fact that wages in the U.S.S.R. are on the whole much lower than in this country, most teachers' salaries must still be reckoned as poor. At the upper end of the scale, the rewards can be high—the staff of higher educational establishments, academicians, directors with higher qualifications, and teachers who write textbooks[14] can do very well financially. For the ordinary teacher, the 1964 increase improved matters, but even so, and even when allowance is made for extra earnings, the salary is still modest. A starting salary of eighty roubles a month is hardly adequate recognition of the importance of the teacher's work to society. The authorities are doubtless aware of the need to improve the teachers' lot, but are subject to many economic pressures, such as the need for defence and industrial spending on a large scale. The recent increases were in any case overdue, having been originally scheduled for 1962. This suggests that any further improvement may be some time in coming.

Social Status of the Teacher

Learning and scholarship in old Russia were traditionally regarded with reverence bordering on superstition, especially by those who lacked them. The teacher, as the 'intellectual' with whom people were most likely to come in contact, was looked on with particular esteem tempered, in some cases, with suspicion. After the revolution their prestige diminished considerably; socially, industrial work gained status at the expense of intellectual activity, and politically teachers as a group were suspected of being tarred with the bourgeois brush. The influx of new ill-trained teachers to the schools and colleges did not help matters either.

It was not long before the Soviet régime realized the importance of education for the realization of its ends; the standard of teacher training was raised as soon as possible, and teachers were given continuous propaganda boosts by the authorities. Both processes have gone on since the 1930s; among a welter of official proclamations, two quotations from *Pravda* will serve to show the official attitude: 'The many changes which have occurred in our Motherland under the Soviet régime are in no small degree due to the selfless labour of the Soviet teacher'

(December 1954). A headline in July 1960 is more precise: 'The teacher is the closest aid of the Party in rearing the New Man'. Respect for the teacher has long been held up by the authorities as a political and social virtue.

Apart from sloganizing, one way in which the government gives recognition to the work of teachers is by awarding them honours and decorations. Some of these are specifically educational, such as 'Honoured Teacher of the R.S.F.S.R.', but educational workers account for a high proportion of the general Soviet 'Honours List'. The American George Counts, writing in 1961,[15] details the presentation to teachers of the highest state decorations, including 86 Orders of Lenin, 163 Orders of the Red Banner of Labour, 258 Orders of the Badge of Honour, and 697 Medals for Labour Valour. Some of the Orders of Lenin (the highest award in the U.S.S.R.) went to such leading figures as the Minister of Education of the R.S.F.S.R., the President of the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences, and other 'top brass', but even at this level schoolteachers and directors figured prominently.

Popular attitudes are more difficult to judge. There are instances of parent-teacher bodies finding it difficult to arouse interest among the local populace, or of students who regard teaching as a second-best job (and not only for financial reasons) or parents in some of the more remote Central Asian areas who regard teachers as sinister government agents who introduce all manner of modern devilry such as making girls go to school. The old automatic respect, where it depended on the reverence of the ignorant for the learned, was bound to dwindle with the growth of mass education. The average teacher's financial status, above all, is hardly likely to raise his prestige in the eyes of his fellow-citizens. Governmental pronouncements notwithstanding, it is probable that the status of the profession has not yet fully recovered from the collapse of the 1930s.

On the other hand, the social prestige of the teacher has risen. Politically, they are supported at all levels; socially, they play a part in local and national affairs out of all proportion to their numbers. The level of teachers' qualifications is improving, which is likely to increase their prestige. Education is also the most important road to advancement, which enhances the teacher's standing in the eyes of pupils and parents alike. Traditional regard for 'culture' helps too; the popular awe of the

teacher as the fount of all wisdom was bound to vanish, but this does not mean that he can be dismissed as of no account. The present wage levels can hardly be called tempting, yet competition for entry to the pedagogic institutes is keen. Popular respect for education is high; the Soviet Union as a whole appears to value its teachers at least in the abstract. If the authorities were to back up their statements with cash, they would leave the teachers in no doubt at all of their importance to the community and the nation.

1. *Postanovlenie TsK KPSS i SM SSSR*, 9 May 1963. See *The Times Educational Supplement*, 25 May 1963.

2. The higher proportion is accounted for partly by the fact that some of the post-graduate students have been seconded from other institutes which have no such facilities of their own.

3. The R.S.F.S.R. Ministry of Education also publishes a large number of more specialist journals on such subjects as the teaching of chemistry, history, Russian, polytechnical education, Russian in the national schools, and a host of others.

4. Several volumes of the Children's Encyclopedia have been issued, but there is no sign as yet of the Pedagogic Encyclopedia, though both have been projected for a number of years.

5. One complaint sometimes made to *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* is that bad timetabling sometimes makes it necessary for teachers to remain in the school when not actually teaching.

6. Even in the R.S.F.S.R., where reorganization is said to be ninety per cent complete, there are pockets where twenty to thirty per cent of the schools are still operating under the old system. Examples are the Chelyabinsk, Ulyanovsk, Perm, and Amur regions. The proportion of unrecognized schools is probably higher in some at least of the minority republics.

7. The reasons for making so much of this case may well go beyond questions of school organization and staff regulations. Stalin described Mayakovsky as the outstanding Soviet poet, and that was how he had to be presented in the school. As often happens, many teachers kept to the set line long after Stalin's death. The case of the pupil's essay was probably used as a means of letting teachers know that the former line on Mayakovsky was no longer required.

(The original article appeared in *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, 22 November 1962. In the issue of 10 January 1963 it was stated that many letters had been received, and one on each side was published.)

8. V. Basov, *Finansirovanie shkol*, pp. 17–20 (Gosfinizdat, Moscow, 1962). Allowance has been made for the changes of 15 July 1964.

9. Clearly, secondary teachers benefit from this more than their primary colleagues. Going on the assumption that every extra hour taught is paid for at the rate of 1/18 or 1/24 of the weekly wage, as the

case may be, this will mean that primary teachers must not only teach longer to qualify for the extra, but will be paid for it at a lower rate.

10. Only a few secondary teachers or directors have higher degrees, though such titles as 'Honoured Teachers' may be found at all levels.

11. Edmund Nash, 'Purchasing power of Soviet Workers', *Monthly Labour Review*, April 1960, pp. 359–64 (Chicago: Holzman, Rand, and McNally). The figures are only approximations, but they appear to include most extra payments such as overtime, marking, etc., though probably not higher degree or special responsibility payments. Nash's figures are in old roubles, but have been converted here into new roubles. The rate is ten old to one new.

12. *Zakon SSSR*, 15 July 1964. Some details are given in Khrushchov's address to the Supreme Soviet, 13 July 1964. (*Narodnoe Obrazovanie*, No. 8, August 1964, pp. 1–6.)

13. Edmund Nash, op. cit. The great majority of skilled workers earn about 125–50 roubles a month. The maximum of 250 roubles is not very common.

14. Textbook writing can be extremely lucrative. The royalties from one book used throughout the country have been known to total as much as an ordinary teacher's earnings for his entire professional career.

15. George S. Counts, 'A Word about the Soviet Teacher' (*Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1, June 1961).

7 Conclusions and Comments

The non-Communist observer, looking at the Soviet educational system, is faced with the basic difficulty that his own standards of judgement on educational matters often do not apply. The system is expressly designed to help in the building of a communist society, and is carefully controlled by the Soviet state and the Communist Party for that purpose. Its success or failure is judged by the extent to which it assists those political and social ends. Basically, then, the outside observer's view of Soviet education depends on his view of the U.S.S.R., and inevitably involves the discussion of wider issues than the purely educational. Important though these issues are, this is not the place for a critique of Marxist theory or its Leninist application in the Soviet Union. The educational system of any country has to be examined in its context; it is one thing to object to Communism, or Catholicism, or 'Americanism', but another to object to the fact that the schools of various countries propagate Marxism, Catholic doctrine, or the American Way of Life. It is hard to see how they could do anything else. There is little point in condemning a chisel for not being a screwdriver.

When all that is allowed for, several comments can be made on Soviet education even within its terms of reference. It is only to be expected that it will adopt the Marxist viewpoint, and seek to build a new society by training the 'New Man', but it is questionable how far a dogmatic approach can serve the educational needs of any society other than the most static. Marx once said himself that he would never become a Marxist; Engels was careful to point out that Marxism was not a doctrine, but a method of inquiry; Sidney and Beatrice Webb,[1] warm admirers of the U.S.S.R., drew attention in 1935 to the dangers of what they called 'the disease of orthodoxy'. Yet there has always been

a strong tendency in the U.S.S.R. to regard Marxism as a kind of Holy Writ; the solutions to problems of the twentieth century are often presupposed by reference to the statements of a philosopher of the nineteenth. Dogmatism is less widespread than it was in the heyday of Lysenko and Zhdanov during the Stalin era, but recent events have shown that it is by no means gone; thaw has been followed by freeze more than once, and the bullying of artists and writers that goes with each regression does the Soviet Union no good at all. In education, the same danger is present, especially at the higher levels; the idea that investigation and experiment must fit the facts to the theory is profoundly unscientific. This has been to some extent recognized in the scientific field; scientists have been left comparatively free of ideological blinkers, and it is here, significantly, that the greatest successes have been achieved. It remains for the same point to be taken concerning philosophy, history, and the arts, though the prospects of an easing-off here do not seem very bright at the moment. The Soviet authorities would not, of course, be impressed in the slightest by any argument that education and its content should be free of political control and ideological guidance; but they might consider that when the Marxist framework of ideas is allowed to become a cage, limitations are placed on constructive thinking which no growing society in a rapidly changing world can afford.

The same holds good for the approach to moral education. In the circumstances, it is only to be expected that it should be based on political, social, and patriotic virtues, and that the schools should seek to instil these from the earliest possible moment. The seriousness with which the problem is taken, and the important place given to it in school and teacher-training programmes, is something from which we could learn. Further, it seems successful to a considerable extent, if the high degree of cooperation in the schools is anything to go by. Just how far it is successful is impossible to say, but clearly it is far from universally effective. The continual sloganizing on moral matters appears to have little effect on the growing number of juvenile delinquents;[2] with others, preaching can lead to indifference if not actual rebellion. For all the stress on moral education, there seems to be a great deal of corruption and graft in many sections of Soviet society, so serious that the authorities have been able to think of no more constructive solution than the death penalty

for economic crimes, a retrograde step that looks suspiciously like a panic measure. The social and moral earnestness of the Soviet school is obviously not enough. Also, by its stress on social conformity, it leaves room for the time-server and the prig to flourish. These are international phenomena, not peculiar to the Soviet Union; but it is clear that an ethic of love of Motherland and Party and struggle for the building of Communism is no more successful as a moral panacea than religious dogma, the Frontier Spirit, or compulsory games.

From the point of view of the British or American observer, the rigidity of the Soviet school system is almost frightening, with its tight central control and its uniformity of curricula and methods for practically every school and child in the country. Education, however, like politics, is the art of the possible. Considering the enormous difficulties facing the Soviet régime after the revolution, it is doubtful if gradualist or *laissez faire* policies could have achieved as much. Even now, most of the defects in school organization seem to arise when local officials have been able to ignore the central authority, and it is usually intervention from the top that puts abuses right. Decentralization, especially on the American pattern, would almost certainly lead to further discrepancies between areas in standard of schooling, and widen the gap between town and country in particular. Uniform curricula have some advantages in a country where the population is becoming increasingly mobile, by enabling children to continue their schooling in a new area without loss of time or much need for readjustment. Prescribed methods of teaching help some teachers at least, as we have seen, while standard regulations for children's behaviour can ensure that teachers and pupils alike know where they stand. On the other hand, there is little doubt that some Soviet teachers, especially the more imaginative and original, do feel some frustration. Every new idea, be it for school organization, lesson, procedure, or anything else, has to go through 'normal channels', which are liable to become clogged, particularly in a system as complex and all-embracing as that of the U.S.S.R. The government is, in theory at least, in favour of eventual devolution of more responsibility to local bodies in education as in other things, but there is little sign of anything being done about this at the moment. Some variations in practice do, as we have seen, exist with the blessings of the authorities, but as long as they remain convinced that there is

one 'correct' solution for every problem, uniformity is likely to remain the general rule.

One of the advantages of studying someone else's educational system is that it can make us take a closer look at our own. This is not to suggest that we can lift educational ideas and practices out of context and transplant them into ours; some aspects of Soviet education would obviously be quite inappropriate to our own society. Nevertheless, we can still learn from the U.S.S.R., and find that some of its ideas, adapted to our own different needs, might prove extremely useful. Among the issues in which Soviet experience can give us food for thought are the links between the school and other educative influences, such as the family and the youth organizations; the place of science and technology, vocational and technical education; part-time education, especially at higher levels; the attitude to streaming and selection in the school; and the place of women in education.

It is a commonplace almost everywhere that education, in the widest sense, goes on outside the school as well as in it. Most educational systems take some account at least of this fact. The Soviet Union, however, pays rather more attention to out-of-school influences than most other countries, with its deliberate control of the mass media, such as the Press, television, the cinema, etc., the highly developed system of parent-teacher consultation, and the important part played in the whole process by the Pioneers and the Komsomol. Opinion in the West does not accept the idea of so much direct control of the mass media, but the banning of 'horror comics' in 1955, and the recent appointment of a committee to investigate the effects of television on children, indicate that the idea of control is not opposed in principle, though few would care to go as far in this as the Soviet authorities do. As for the work of the Parents' Committees, and the obligation of the school to keep in touch with the pupils' homes, it is obvious that this greatly helps the Soviet teacher. It is doubtful if quite such a close connexion is possible in our very different social atmosphere, but it could fairly be asked if enough is done in this country to acquaint parents with the work of the school and the teachers with the parents' outlook and problems. With the spread of full secondary education, parents are often called upon to make decisions about their children's courses, while they themselves may lack the information necessary to understand what is happening in

the school. Some schools, of course, do a great deal to keep contact with children's families by means of parent-teacher associations, school Open Days, consultation with individual parents, information leaflets, and so on. At best, there can be just as much contact in some British schools as anywhere in the U.S.S.R. But the general picture is very uneven; all too often, the only time parents and teachers come together is at an occasional meeting where mutual regard is expressed, with a few visits from parents at other times to complain about progress or inquire about their children's chances in the examination stakes. Some schools, again, regard parents as a nuisance and do all they can to discourage them from coming near the place at all. Many teachers point out, quite justly, that the best-organized parent-teacher bodies involve too much preaching to the converted; the very parents who most need consultation with the school are the ones who can rarely be induced to have anything to do with it, unless it is to make trouble about discipline or punishment. The social pressures which work on the recalcitrant Soviet parent are not available here, and it is doubtful if there is any other inducement that could be as effective. The bait of examination passes is all very well for the minority whose children can come within at least hoping distance of success; but this does not solve the problem of 'selling' education to the rest. There is no easy solution, but it seems that the problem has, in most cases, not been getting the attention that it deserves.

Again, there is no likelihood of a unified youth movement of the Soviet type operating here, but its use as an integral part of the educational system merits some attention. The present British youth organizations can, on the whole, provide a useful contribution to the social, moral, recreational, and physical training of their members. Their functions, basically, are not essentially different from those of the Pioneers and Komsomol; the main difference is that most young people in this country never come near the youth organizations. The Soviet school takes account of the youth movement's work in its own, while few of our schools do, even where there is a big enough proportion of membership to justify it. The Soviet organizations are heavily subsidized and provided with trained youth leaders. Ours are usually short of leaders and suffer from a chronic and crippling shortage of money; government spending is so tiny

that the youth service has often been described by those trying to make it work as the Cinderella of the educational system. As with the problem of family–school relations, the absence of a favourable social atmosphere rules out an easy solution. Nevertheless, the Soviet régime has managed to make the youth organizations into an immensely valuable ally of the teacher, in school and out; there is little evidence that we are even contemplating anything of the kind.

Science and technology are heavily stressed at every stage of the Soviet educational system, as we have seen, both for practical and ideological reasons. To many in this country the emphasis may seem excessive, but it is worth considering how far we are prepared to go on being outdistanced. Certainly, the sciences have been improving their status in our schools over the past decade or two, and in some places at least technical education is no longer considered to be a second-best. Yet there is still a widespread assumption in our universities that applied studies, such as engineering, are somehow less worthy than the purely theoretical. In many of our schools, technical subjects are regarded as the preserve of pupils judged incapable of doing anything else. In spite of the fact that we are living in a technological age, a large proportion of our young people leaves school with little idea of the fundamentals of science and even less of technical subjects; we still tend to equate 'technical' with 'vocational' and assume that future professional and white-collar workers have no need to know anything about machinery, tools, materials, or technical processes. The spirit of Plato and Aristotle, who dismissed technical knowledge and skill as 'unworthy', is far from dead. In the Soviet Union, however, the view is now taken that for the future citizen of an industrial society some familiarity with industrial production should be just as much part of his general education as theoretical science, language, or social studies, whether or not his job will involve him directly in work of this kind. This view is taken partly for political reasons that are not applicable here, but we too live in an industrial society, and we too, perhaps, could re-examine our idea of what a growing child should be taught about the world he lives in. We could ask ourselves, for one thing, if we can still afford to spend quite so much of our scholastic energies on the Classics, which still occupy the attention of far more children than either interest or usefulness would lead one to

expect. Pleas for a more realistic approach to the curriculum are often met by the objection that it is already overcrowded; but on examination, we can find a great deal in our schools that is taught only because, like Mount Everest, it is there.

The expansion of various kinds of vocational and professional schools in the U.S.S.R. could also provide food for thought. We have our equivalents in the form of pre-apprenticeship courses, pre-nursing, retail and distributive, catering, clerical, and other similar courses in some schools, technical colleges, and the like. By comparison, however, we are a long way behind; our secondary schooling is still largely based on a division between the 'academic' types and the rest. For the academic secondary pupils in the grammar and senior secondary schools there is a course designed mainly to prepare them for higher education, which only a minority of them will enter. For 'the rest' there are in some cases programmes with a vocational bias, but more usually their secondary schooling consists of the same essentially academic course watered down with the addition of some practical subjects. Even this tends to mark time as the pupils leave in batches during their final year. There are many who would object strenuously to any element of vocational training in the secondary school, pointing out that this is the time for 'general' education; this would be a reasonable point of view were it not for the fact that what we call 'general' education in the grammar school is no less vocational than the more technical subjects—there must be hundreds who take Latin for university entrance for every one who takes it for general culture. The trouble is that we have not decided what we expect secondary education to do for the vast majority who will not be going on to higher education—and this includes most of the 'academic types' as well. The Soviet system provides one answer—a general education up to fifteen, including basic familiarity with technical skills, and a more directly specialized and vocational bent thereafter. The young people concerned seem to feel that what they are learning is relevant to their needs and experience. Can a similar claim be made for our system?

Part-time education, especially at the higher level, is an increasingly important part of the Soviet system. For those undergoing it, this has the disadvantage of making the courses longer and much more arduous, but a significant proportion of trained manpower in the U.S.S.R. is obtained in this way, and it means

that the door to further education is never quite closed; many people who would have been denied such opportunities in an entirely full-time system can pursue their studies in the evenings or by correspondence, to their own benefit and that of the community at large. This is a field where Britain is lagging far behind, with the notable exception of London University. There is a tendency in many institutions of higher learning to regard any kind of external study with suspicion, and some even reject outright the idea that it can be worthy of the name of higher education. This is a short-sighted view. More and more eligible young people seek admission to our universities and colleges every year, and in spite of the opening of new establishments and the expansion of existing ones, more and more are being turned away. On present showing, the extension of full-time places is unlikely to cope with the rising demand in the foreseeable future. It is possible that a new approach to the question of external study could do much to help solve this increasingly pressing problem.

The question of 'streaming' or grading by innate ability is such a vexed one in our own educational system that the experience of other countries must inevitably claim our interest. At first glance, the prevalent attitudes in the two systems are worlds apart. Most teachers in this country assume that children have widely different degrees of inborn intelligence, which is affected only slightly by anything that can be done in the school; that the best approach is to divide children into groups according to their level of ability, teaching them within the limits of their predetermined capacity; and that some method of intelligence testing can best show what these limits are. The Soviet view, on the other hand, is that environment is much more important than heredity in determining ability; that children should be graded only by age and attainment, not some supposed level of innate intelligence; that the teacher's aim should be to bring them all up to the required level; and that such devices as intelligence tests, by undervaluing the contribution of learning, limit the child's chances from the start and therefore must not be used. The available evidence suggests that both these points of view are overstated, as many teachers in both countries are coming to suspect. In the Soviet schools, the insistence on teaching children of practically all levels together must raise many difficulties for teachers and pupils

alike. At whatever level the teacher pitches his lessons, there are always some who cannot keep up and some who will be held back. To suggest that children are not naturally bright or dull, but only well or badly taught, does not square with the facts in any system, Soviet or other. To have the quick children help the slower is undoubtedly of some use, but many teachers are well aware that the differences remain, as witnessed by the large number of repeats every year, and are inclined to justify unstreamed classes on social rather than purely scholastic grounds.

Many of our schools, however, are just as uncritical in their acceptance of the doctrine of predetermined intelligence as the Soviet schools are in their rejection of it. There seems to be little agreement among our psychologists about the definition of intelligence. Also, there is far too much blind faith in the apparently precise Intelligence Quotient ratings obtained from standardized tests. This is a complicated and controversial subject, and space does not permit even an outline of the major issues here.[3] Suffice to say that I.Q. is a more meaningful concept than Soviet psychologists allow, but only as a rough rule-of-thumb; the attempts of some British and American psychologists to prove that it is finely accurate are not altogether convincing. The value of intelligence tests in predicting performance in secondary schools, for example, is higher than any other known methods, but there is still an estimated error of five to ten per cent. Such prophecies tend to be self-fulfilling in any case; a child assigned at eleven to a secondary modern course is likely to settle at that level, even if his potential is in fact higher; the later performances of 'failed-eleven-plus' children in some comprehensive schools have often borne this out. Again, if a child's I.Q. is as mathematically accurate as is sometimes believed, his performance on later tests should be exactly the same. In fact, it is usually quite close, but not close enough to be certain in the large number of borderline cases. In short, we tend to accept the idea of predetermined intelligence a little too readily. The numerical formulae involved in tests give them an appearance of precision they do not possess. The experience of the Soviet schools does not justify our throwing the whole idea of innate intelligence overboard, but they do seem to get good results with what most of our schools would regard as unpromising material. Perhaps if we used our schools less as a selective net

for the academic we might find that we have been too timid in our assessment of what is possible.

The question of co-education may also be worth looking at. In Scotland at least it has never been a burning issue—most of the few single-sex schools have adopted segregation not from any educational consideration, but because they believe that it mirrors English practice and thus raises the 'social tone'. In England (and, for that matter, in France and Germany too) the issue is still a live one, and has given rise to much comment and speculation, accompanied by an almost complete absence of investigation. Broadly, the main argument for co-education is that it is the best way of avoiding the development of sexual repressions,[4] but since there have been no controlled follow-up inquiries, and since there are so many other factors in determining sexual attitudes, there is little evidence that could be called conclusive. Opponents often argue that co-education, on the contrary, exposes the children to distractions and even moral[5] danger, but there is no evidence[6] to support this at all. It is true that girls, on average, mature faster than boys; but there is such a big overlap, and the developmental rates of individuals are so different, that this does not prove much either. The experiences of Scotland, Scandinavia, and the Soviet Union in this matter do not suggest that the mixing of the sexes does any harm. Nor, in fairness, do they support the notion that it can act as a psychological cure-all.

The place of women in the Soviet system merits rather more attention. Of students in higher education, about half are women. Three-quarters of the doctors, and a quarter of the engineers, are women. Women are as eligible for promoted posts as men; the men still predominate at the higher levels, but not to the same extent as is found here. There are no senior posts (headships of schools, for example) specifically reserved for men, nor do the universities and colleges have quotas for women entrants—both practices being common in this country. That a woman must choose between marriage and a career is less common in Britain than it was; in the U.S.S.R. the question is not permitted to arise. In theory, we have few specific bars left against women in higher education, but as a group they are still under a disadvantage. There are fewer places for them, they contribute only a minority of trained personnel, and there is still a widespread attitude that further education is somehow

wasted on them. We have to ask ourselves if we can still afford even the remnants of masculine exclusiveness—unless, of course, we believe that women are, as a group, intellectually inferior to men, a belief that still survives but owes more to wishful thinking than to the available evidence.[7] Faced with international competition and ever-growing demands on our educational system, we need all the highly qualified people we can get, whatever their sex.

There are many aspects of Soviet education that are unlikely to commend themselves to the British observer. In teaching methods, for instance, it has little to offer in the way of constructive ideas. It is clear, too, that the achievements of the system are not always as great as the authorities claim, as can be seen from the continuous stream of complaints in *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* and elsewhere.[8] To anyone who rejects Marxist principles or communist policy (by no means necessarily the same thing), the basic aims of Soviet education will be unacceptable. In spite of its many failings, however, the system has made great strides since 1917, notably the virtual wiping out of illiteracy, the provision of a system of free, compulsory mass education in an erstwhile backward country, the spread of higher education, and the spectacular advance in many fields of science and technology. The lasting impression is that the U.S.S.R. cares about education, recognizes its importance as an instrument for securing the eventual well being of society, and places it high on the list of national priorities. As Professor George Kline of Columbia University put it in 1958:

> It is doubtful that any society has ever poured such a high proportion of its energies and resources into educational activities, in the broadest sense of the term, as the Soviet Union is doing today. Soviet leaders, from the beginning, have treated organized education with greater seriousness than political leaders in any other country, and this seriousness is widely shared by Soviet students and teachers, at every level of the school system.

This has taken a long time to be appreciated in the West. As another American, Dr Lawrence Derthick, U.S. Commissioner of Education, said about the same time:

> We were simply not prepared for the degree to which the U.S.S.R. as a nation is committed to education as a means of national advancement . . . Our major reaction therefore is one of astonishment—and I

choose the word advisedly—at the extent to which this seems to have been accomplished.

Such statements, from men who can hardly be said to be anxious to find complimentary things to say about the U.S.S.R., provide the biggest thinking-point of all. We still tend to think of education as a matter of personal benefit rather than national survival; we still too often assume that by educating individual X we are doing him a personal favour, as though he were the sole gainer in the process. Many of us, if we are frank about it, are still inclined to think of education as a luxury or a privilege. Faced with the challenge of the Soviet school, we have to consider whether we are giving education the attention, money, and effort that it deserves and demands. Words are cheap, and complacency is always dangerous even when justified. It is true that many features of our educational system yield nothing to that of the U.S.S.R., and that the Soviet system has many defects, some serious. But this kind of comparison is not very profitable. The main point is this: in the Soviet Union, education is regarded as a matter of first-rate national importance, and treated accordingly.[9] Can we in Britain, in all honesty, say as much?

1. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism: a New Civilisation.*

2. For a discussion of juvenile delinquency in the U.S.S.R., see T. R. Fyvel, *The Insecure Offenders,* Chapter 13 (Pelican, 1963).

3. Intelligence testing is discussed heatedly and at length in a wide range of books and publications. A prominent supporter of the practice is H. J. Eysenck (*Uses and Abuses of Psychology* and *Know Your Own I.Q.*, both Pelicans); forceful opponents include Robin Pedley (*The Comprehensive School,* Pelican, 1963) and Brian Simon (*Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School,* Lawrence and Wishart, 1953).

4. A. S. Neill, *That Dreadful School* (passim), and elsewhere. Neill is thought-provoking but is generally regarded as an extremist.

5. Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical *Divini Illius Magistri* objected strongly to this 'promiscuous herding together of males and females on an equal footing', but many Catholics reject his point of view.

6. Surveys of the *opinions* of teachers and heads of schools seem to be the nearest thing we have approaching evidence on the topic of co-education. On few educational subjects can there have been so many pronouncements on the basis of so little evidence.

7. The intellectual capacity of the sexes is dealt with by Anthony Barnett, *The Human Species* (Pelican, 1957), Chapter 10. (He also examines the concept of intelligence in the previous chapter.) Some of the most cherished myths about sex differences (and many other things)

are entertainingly demolished by Bergen Evans in *The Natural History of Nonsense* (Michael Joseph, 1947).

8 One of the hazards of investigating Soviet education through Soviet sources is that one can all too easily make a collection of complaints and shortcomings, without knowing how representative they are. Relying too heavily on them can give just as distorted a picture as can the exclusive use of other Soviet sources, which insist that everything in the garden is lovely.

9. Educational spending accounts for over seven per cent in the U.S.S.R., 4·7 per cent in the U.K.

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A forty-eight-page outline of the educational system from the official point of view. It relies rather heavily on broad generalizations, but is useful as a summary. No date is given, but it obviously deals with the post-1958 system.

Korolev, F., *Education in the U.S.S.R.* (Soviet News Booklet No. 24, London).

This is also a brief (eighty-seven pages) description of the system from the official standpoint. Read with caution (it is unhelpfully vague on some important points such as teachers' salaries), it gives a bird's-eye view of the pre-1958 situation.

Meek, Dorothea L., ed. and trans., *Soviet Youth: Some Achievements and Problems* (1947, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London).

This collection of translated excerpts from the Soviet Press, professional and popular, covers a wide range of educational topics, and brings many of the issues to life by dealing with them in immediate terms.

Ministry of Education of the R.S.F.S.R., *Public Education in the U.S.S.R. 1960–61* (1961, Ministerstvo Prosveshcheniya R.S.F.S.R., Moscow).

The Soviet report to the International Conference on Public Education, Geneva, 1961. The text is in Russian, English, French, and Spanish. Like the pamphlets of Korolev and Kondakov, it is written entirely from the official point of view and aimed at a non-Soviet audience.

Prokofiev, M. A., Chilikin, M. G., and Tulpanov, S. I., *Higher Education in the U.S.S.R.* (1961, UNESCO Educational Studies and Documents No. 39, Paris).

A short account of Soviet higher education, higher technical education, and higher humanistic studies by three prominent Soviet educationists, under the UNESCO imprint. This study is particularly useful for the specimen curricula in various institutions, showing the range of and the time allotted to each.

Shapovalenko, S. G. (editor), *Polytechnical Education in the U.S.S.R.* (1963, UNESCO).

A detailed account prepared for UNESCO by the Academy of Pedagogical Science of the R.S.F.S.R., written as an official exposition for a foreign audience.

U.S. Office of Education, *Education in the U.S.S.R.* (U.S. Office of Education Bulletin 1957, No. 14).

A mainly factual account of the Soviet system before the 1958 reforms. Comments and comparisons are kept to a minimum.

Yelyutin, V. P., *Higher Education in the U.S.S.R.* (1959, Soviet Booklet No. 51, London).

A brief survey, aimed at the foreign reader, by the Minister of Higher Education of the U.S.S.R.

Glossary of Russian Terms

Akademik: Academician. Member of the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. (q.v.), the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., etc.

Akademiya Pedagogicheskikh Nauk R.S.F.S.R.: Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. The most influential body for educational research and popularization. The other Soviet Republics have their own Academies.

Aspirant: A post-graduate student in higher education, studying for the *Kandidat* degree (q.v.).

Assistent: Assistant lecturer (in an institution of higher education).

Attestat zrelosti: Certificate of Maturity, awarded to students successfully completing a general secondary course. It entitles them to apply for admission to higher education, but is not in itself enough.

Chlen-korrespondent: Corresponding member of an Academy (q.v.).

Chornaya rabota: Black work, i.e. manual labour.

Deistvitelnye chleny: Full members of an Academy (q.v.).

Dekan: Dean. Head of a faculty in an institution of higher education.

Detski sad: Kindergarten. The second stage of pre-school education (*doshkolnoe obrazovanie*), for children between the ages of three and seven.

Diplom: Diploma. The primary qualification awarded in higher education, the equivalent of a first degree.

Doktor nauk: Doctor of Sciences. The highest academic degree.

Dotsent: Reader or senior lecturer in an institution of higher education.

Druzhina: Brigade, e.g., of Pioneers. The school Pioneer unit.

Fakultet: Faculty. The primary subdivision of an institution of higher education. Each faculty deals with one subject or group of related subjects, e.g. Geology, History, Languages.

Feldsher: A second-grade medical practitioner, somewhere between a nurse and a qualified doctor.

Guligan: Hooligan. A rather wide term used to describe juvenile and other delinquents who resort to rowdyism or violence.

Institut: Institute. A higher educational establishment dealing with one speciality or group of specialities, e.g. teacher training, economics, law, technology.

Kafedra: Chair. A department within a faculty (q.v.).
Kandidat nauk: Candidate of Sciences. The first post-graduate degree, roughly equivalent to a Ph.D.
Kandidat pedagogicheskikh nauk: Candidate of pedagogic sciences. The first post-graduate degree for teachers.
Kharakteristika: Character reference, required of applicants to institutions of higher education.
Komsomol: Also known as the V.L.K.S.M. The senior branch of the youth movement, for young people between fifteen and twenty-seven years.
Komsomolskaya Pravda: Komsomol Truth. The national newspaper of the Komsomol organization.

Molodaya Gvardiya: Young Guard. The Komsomol publishing house.
Molodoy Kommunist: Young Communist. The Komsomol publishing journal.

Nachalnaya shkola: Elementary school, for children between the ages of seven and eleven. The elementary school is now usually organized in the same building as an incomplete secondary school, the whole being known as an eight-year school (*Vosmiletnaya shkola,* q.v.).
Nachalnoe obrazovanie: Elementary education (v. supra).
Nepolnoe srednee obrazovanie: Incomplete secondary education. The stage of schooling from eleven to fifteen, usually in the fifth to eighth forms of the eight-year school (q.v.).

Obshchestvovedenie: Social studies. A course in current affairs and Marxist-Leninist theory given to senior pupils in Soviet schools.
Odinadtsatiletnaya shkola: Eleven-year school. A combination of an eight-year school and a secondary polytechnical school (qq.v.). It provides a 'general polytechnical education' from seven to eighteen.
Otryad: Detachment. A unit of the Pioneer Organization, based on the school class.

Pedagogicheskie chteniya: Pedagogic readings, contests organized by the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences, where educational papers are read in public, and the best ones published.
Pedagogicheskie instituty: Pedagogic institutes. Teacher training colleges, which train specialists for secondary schools and, to an increasing degree, for elementary schools as well.
Pedagogicheskie uchilishcha: Pedagogic schools. Specialized secondary schools (q.v.) which train teachers for elementary schools and pre-school establishments. Students from eight-year schools study for four years, those who have completed their secondary education for

two years. The functions of this kind of establishment are gradually being taken over by the pedagogic institutes (v. supra).

Personalnye immennye stipendii: Personal stipends. Commemorative scholarships which make extra money available to outstanding students in higher education.

Pervoe sentyabrya: First of September. On this date the schools open for the new session.

Pioner: Pioneer. The monthly magazine of the Pioneer Organization.

Pionerskaya Pravda: Pioneer Truth. The national Pioneer newspaper.

Politekhnicheskoe obrazovanie: Polytechnical education. Education based on the fundamentals of industrial and agricultural production. Not to be confused with trade training, which is vocationally biased.

Polnoe srednee obrazovanie: Complete secondary education. The stage of schooling from fifteen to eighteen, leading to the 'Certificate of Maturity' (*Attestat zrelosti*, q.v.).

Prepodavatel: Lecturer in an institution of higher education.

Professionalno-tekhnicheskoe uchilishche: Vocational technical school or trade school. It provides training in a particular trade skill for young workers who have completed eight-year schooling. The course varies from six months to three years.

Profsoyuz rabotnikov prosveshcheniya, vysshei shkoly i nauchnykh uchrezhdenii SSSR: Trade Union of workers in education, higher schools and scientific research of the U.S.S.R. The educational trade union, embracing all types and levels from an Academician to a school canteen cook.

Semestr: Term. Half of an academic year.

Semya i Shkola: Family and School. A monthly magazine for parents, published by the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. (q.v).

Shkola internat: Boarding school.

Shkola prodlennogo dnya: Prolonged day school. A modified version of the boarding school. The children stay at school during the afternoons and for meals, but go home in the evenings.

Sotrudnik: Research worker (in higher education).

Sovietskaya Pedagogika: Soviet Pedagogy. The monthly journal of the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R. (q.v.).

Srednaya politekhnicheskaya shkola: Secondary polytechnical school, a complete secondary school for children from fifteen to eighteen, providing polytechnical training and general education leading up to the Certificate of Maturity. It is often organized in the same building as an eight-year school, the whole being known as an eleven-year school. The full title is 'secondary general educational labour polytechnical school with production training' (*srednaya obshcheobrazovatelnaya trudovaya politekhnicheskaya shkola s proizvodstvennym obucheniem*).

Srednaya shkola: Secondary school. The stage of schooling from the fifth form (age eleven) onwards.

Srednie spetsialnye uchebnye zavedeniya: Secondary specialized educational establishments. Middle schools which provide general education and training for various semi-professional occupations. Students from eight-year schools study for four years, those with complete secondary schooling for two.

Stilyaga: Style-follower, 'zoot-suiter', spiv—there is no exact equivalent. The term is applied to youths who are exclusively concerned with smart dressing and extreme fashion. They are regarded as social parasites and often spoken of along with juvenile delinquents.

Svobodnyi diplom: Free diploma. A diploma from an institution of higher education to certain categories of graduates. It exempts the holder from the obligation to work where sent by the authorities for two or three years.

Tekhnikum: A name sometimes used for secondary specialized schools (q.v.).

Trudovoe obuchenie: Labour training.

Uchitelskaya Gazeta: The Teachers' Newspaper. A thrice-weekly newspaper for teachers published jointly by the R.S.F.S.R. Ministry of Education and the Educational Trade Union.

Uchony soviet: Academic council. The governing body of an institution of higher education. It exists also at faculty level.

VAK (Vysshaya Attestatsionnaya Kommissiya): Higher Qualification Commission. This body confirms the award of higher degrees on behalf of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education. It was set up in 1938.

Vestnik Vysshei Shkoly: Higher School Herald. The monthly journal of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education.

V.L.K.S.M. (Vsesoyuznyi Leninskii Kommunisticheskii Soyuz Molodyozhi): All-Union Leninist Communist League of Youth. Full title of the Komsomol (q.v.).

Vosmiletnaya shkola: Eight-year school. The basic unit in the Soviet school system, it provides elementary and incomplete secondary education from seven to fifteen. Its full designation is 'Incomplete secondary general educational labour polytechnical school' (*Nepolnaya srednaya obshcheobrazovatelnaya trudovaya politekhnicheskaya shkola*).

Voprosy Psikhologii: Problems of Psychology. A specialist journal published by the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the R.S.F.S.R.

Vospitatel: Upbringer. An auxiliary member of staff in a boarding school, nursery, kindergarten, etc.

Vsegda gotov: Always ready (The Pioneer motto).

Vsesoyuznaya Pionerskaya Organizatsiya imeni V. I. Lenina: All-Union Pioneer Organization named after V. I. Lenin. The branch of the Soviet youth movement for children between the ages of ten and fifteen.

VUZ (Vysshee Uchebnoe Zavedenie) Insitution of Higher Education.

Vysshee obrazovanie: Higher education.

Yasli: Nursery, crêche. The first stage of pre-school education, for children up to the age of about three years.

Zaveduyushchii kafedroi: Head of a department (*kafedra*) within a faculty in an institution of higher education. Not necessarily a professor.

Zveno: Link. An informal Pioneer grouping within a detachment (*otryad*) (q.v.).

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